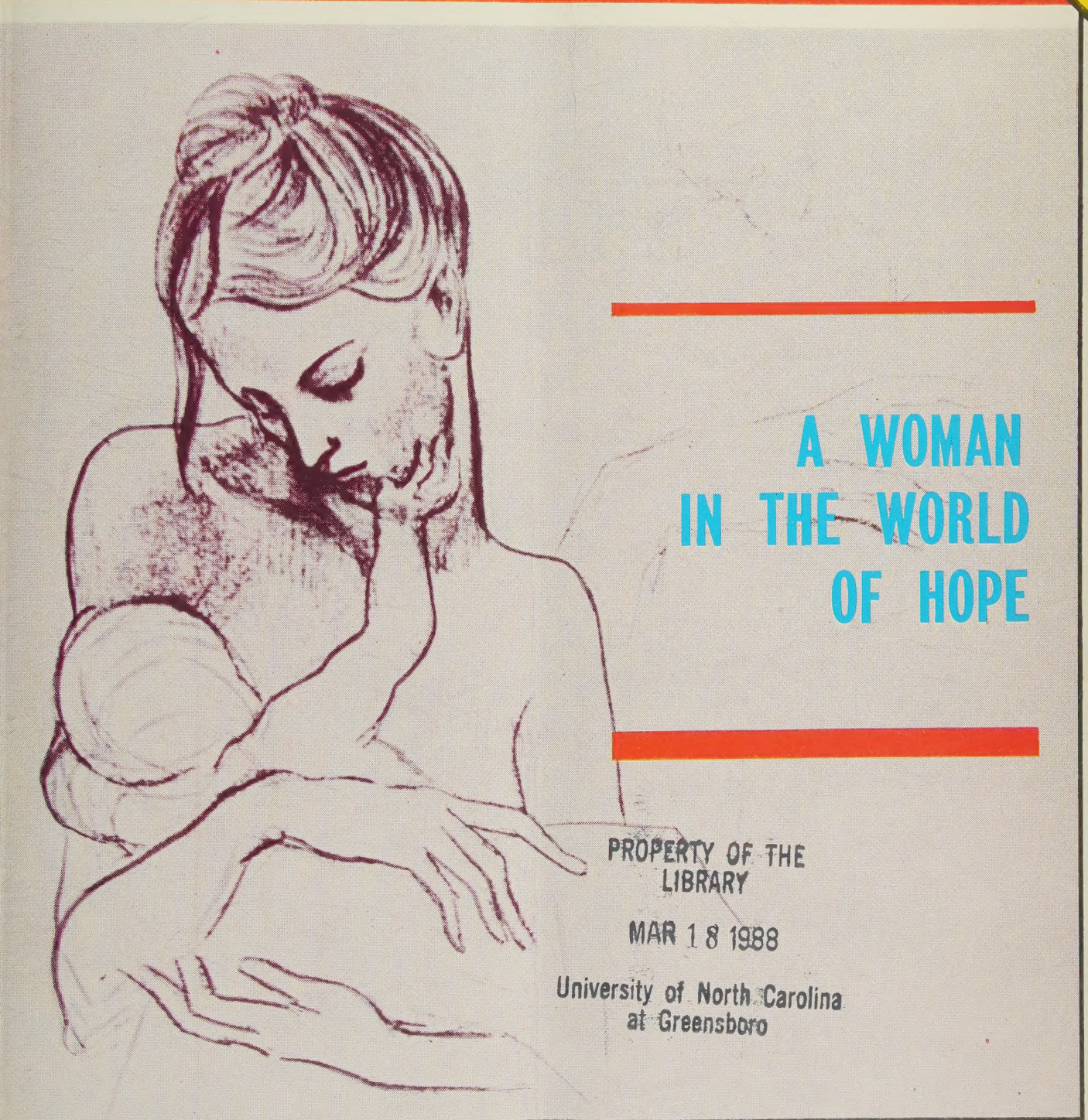
10
MARCH 1988

NEW TIMES

A SOVIET WEEKLY OF WORLD AFFAIRS

Sergei Zalygin on the paradoxes of ecology



A WOMAN IN THE WORLD OF HOPE

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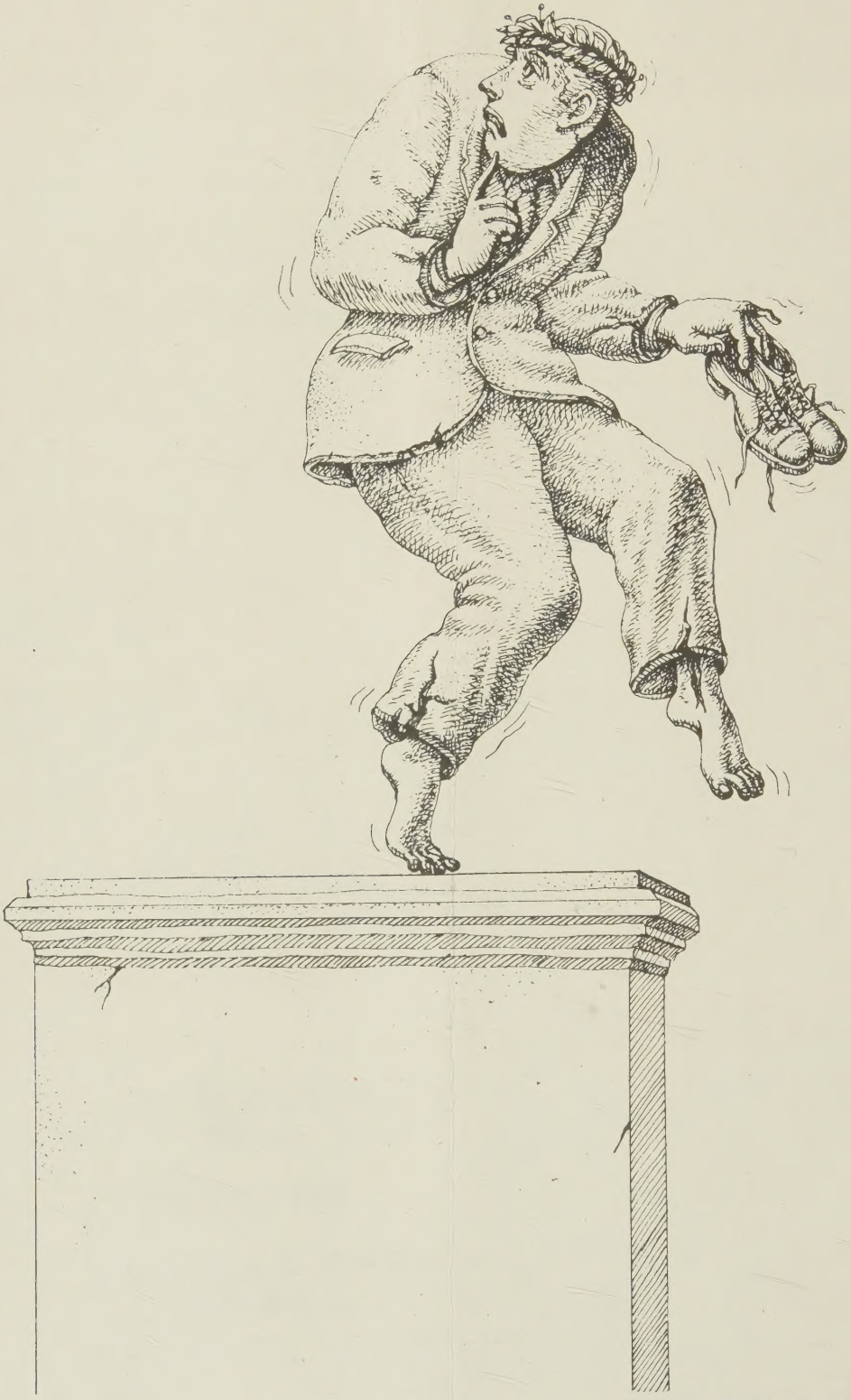
Mieczyslaw Rakowski: THE DEMOCRACY OF RENEWAL



Drawing by Garif Basyrov

NEW TIMES

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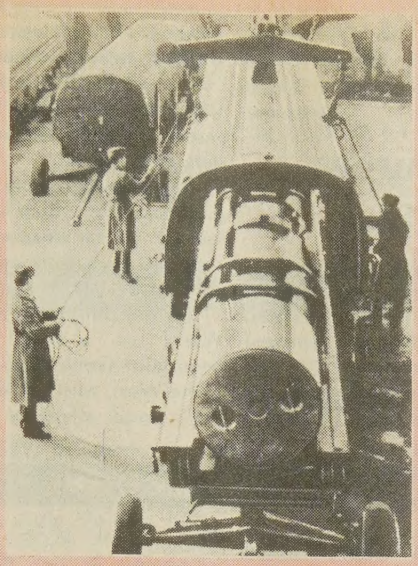
DISARMAMENT PROBLEMS



The withdrawal of Soviet missiles from the G.D.R. and Czechoslovakia before the INF treaty has been ratified; the results of U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz visit to Moscow and the outlook for a 50 per cent cut in strategic offensive armaments. These and other issues are discussed in an interview with VICTOR KARPOV, head of the Arms Limitation and Disarmament Department of the U.S.S.R. Foreign Ministry. **(See p. 5.)**

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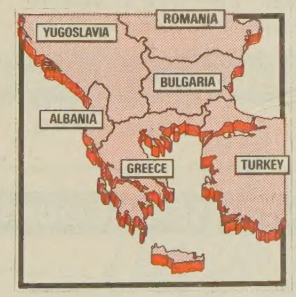

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Pablo Picasso,
"Mother and child"

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GLASNOST

FROM OUR MAILBAG

THE WAY I SEE IT

A realistic approach

Mikhail Gorbachev's recent statement on Afghanistan is characterized, in my view, by his sincere and courageous desire to cut the "Afghan knot" once and for all, and is a tangible example of new thinking and a new approach to international affairs.

The Soviet move is giving a major impetus to the tendency towards international detente which became apparent after Gorbachev's visit to the United States. It is also very important that a historic breakthrough is now being made towards establishing peace and tranquillity in Asia and the Pacific region.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that in this vast region, where two thirds of the world's population live, there are considerably more "hot spots" than anywhere else.

I believe that a favourable settlement of the Afghan problem will unquestionably be an example in resolving conflicts in Asia and elsewhere.

All this goes to show that the Soviet initiatives for the promotion of international peace and broad mutually advantageous cooperation between the Asian and Pacific nations advanced by Mikhail Gorbachev in Vladivostok are being backed up by practical action.

B. BAASANSUREN
attaché at the
Mongolian Embassy
in Moscow

The sources of conflict

I was greatly disturbed to learn that the concept of nuclear deterrence, accepted by France as the basic principle of its foreign policy, still has many ardent champions in the world. It is senseless to believe that Europe has only been able to avoid war for over 40 years because it has nuclear weapons and that there have been some 250 armed conflicts in the Third World because it has no such weapons. This is an extremely dangerous view.

I am sure that many developing countries would immediately use nuclear weapons if they acquired them. Such is the logic of present-day development.

The 250 conflicts in the Third World are a result of the imperialist neocolonialist policy of the West, which interferes in the internal affairs of developing countries and prevents them from choosing their own, independent course.

Newly emergent nations that try to achieve genuine independence are severely punished: direct or indirect wars are started against them. Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Angola, Mozambique, Kampuchea, Libya, Chile and other countries could be cited as examples.

I am sure that this is the principle cause of instability and tension in many parts of the world.

TAHIRJAN
Karachi, Pakistan

READERS' REFLECTIONS

...on redundant labour

Operating on a profitable basis, self-financing, the election of management, and the issue of shares in the Soviet Union will, I think, turn state-owned enterprises into big cooperatives. We already know how intensively cooperators work. Shortage of manpower has been engendered by the extensive growth of production. Will not the intensification of labour lead to redundancy?

SVEN TORESSON
Goteborg, Sweden

... on homelessness

Every time I go through downtown New York and see people sleeping on the sidewalk, I ask myself: what's happening to our society if some Americans have no roof over their heads? How are we to change this situation which is humiliating for thousands of people.

JESSICA LANE
New York, U.S.A.

...on missiles

I've read about the evacuation of Soviet missiles from East European countries. Why such haste? I believe no missiles should be removed from the Federal Republic before the treaty is ratified by Moscow and Washington. This would only weaken the West's defence potential. Everything must be done according to schedule.

GUNTER MAYER
Munich, F.R.G.

REMEMBRANCE

Learn the lessons of the past

I wholeheartedly back the idea of instituting a Day of Remembrance. Few countries have had such a heroic and dramatic history as the Soviet Union. I am sure that citizens feel the need to pay their respects to sons and daughters who gave their lives during the Civil War and in the battles of the Great Patriotic War. We shall also remember the loyal sons of the Party killed in the years of repression. We must know our history and draw lessons from it so that the terrible past is not repeated. The Day of Remembrance will teach us to be wise in choosing our course in the future.

Y. ZIMNEV
Leningrad, U.S.S.R.

EYEWITNESS ACCOUNT

Preaching violence

After the war, "inspired" by appeals for the reunification of families, I moved to Israel, where my parents lived. This is how I found myself far from my homeland, the Soviet Union. And it can be said that my life ended then.

I had a rough time from the outset. It pained me to see my parents living in poor conditions. I could not tolerate the regime that had robbed my family morally and materially. I could not, and still cannot, reconcile myself to many things here.

Here in Israel I saw how many emigrants from the Soviet Union change, revealing their true faces. A covert swindler in the Soviet Union becomes an overt swindler in Israel.

The lack of communication between people in Israel can perhaps be explained by the constant propaganda of violence and the hegemony of the Jewish state. Strength is lauded everywhere, especially in the army.

We are being told not to belive that anything will change after the summit meeting, or that disarmament is a realistic goal as the Soviet Union will not agree to it, and not to believe Gorbachev.

But my friends and I believe in Gorbachev and the Soviet people. The fact that life in the Soviet Union has become more interesting and better in the past few years strengthens our belief. As soon as the opportunity arises, I shall return to my real homeland, the Soviet Union.

JOSIF WULFOVICH
Haifa, Israel

GLASNOST

FROM OUR MAILBAG

POLEMICS

Shares, property and socialism

As a reader of New Times over many years, I would like to comment on the interview with professor Shmelyov published in the issue No. 50, 1987.

The professor sees nothing wrong with a scheme whereby Soviet factories and cooperatives would begin issuing shares and offering them to the public. The purpose is to make better use of the personal savings that have accumulated because industry does not produce the goods people really need.

In China, whose example the professor advises you to follow, the issuing of such shares would be justified because some enterprises are simply unable to get the state bank loans needed for the modernization and expansion of production.

In your country, people keep their savings not at home but in accounts at savings banks. State banks or savings banks could therefore establish a direct and sufficiently effective contact or "bridge" between the owners of money deposits and enterprises in need of funds.

Why issue shares instead of improving the present institutions and making them work more efficiently to meet the new requirement?

ANDRE COMTE
Commelle, France

OPEN LETTER

I want to know...

I have come to Vienna from Spain to study German here. Since my youth I have been interested in the Soviet Union, reading many books by Russian writers and attending lectures on the October revolution of 1917. This interest has never waned, though I do not entirely share your ideas.

Anxious to get the meaning of the word "freedom," I often ask myself: "Are the people of Russia really free? What advantages do they have compared with us? What is worse there than in our countries?"

It has always been my dream to visit the Soviet Union, though not for a week or two as a tourist, but for a year at least - to study or work there. I could then learn Russian, the rudiments of which I studied in Spain, and, most importantly, get to know Soviet people and, with their help, find the answers to these and many other questions that interest me.

CARMINA DE LA ASUNCION MORENO
Vienna, Austria

OPINION

Learning more

In a recent issue of New Times I read with interest Gennady Sysoyev's article on self-management in Yugoslavia. To my knowledge, there were negative aspects to Soviet-Yugoslavian relations. I was therefore surprised and glad to learn that the Soviet Union was considering the question of adopting Yugoslav experience in self-management.

In general, I find it very useful and interesting to read articles and readers' letters on problems of economic management and the relationship between the administration and personnel.

SAID VALHI
Algiers, Algeria

NT CIRCULATION

Much to my regret

Much to my regret, I have had to give up my subscription to New Times, and not because of financial pressure, but in protest against the inefficiency of the distributors of your weekly.

First of all, the magazine is delivered irregularly: many of the issues reach me with delays and sometimes I receive four issues at a time. Once they sent me an English-language issue, though for nearly a year I had received New Times in French.

I don't know how to solve this problem, but I hope you'll help me.

BOURAMA BADJI
Senegalese student

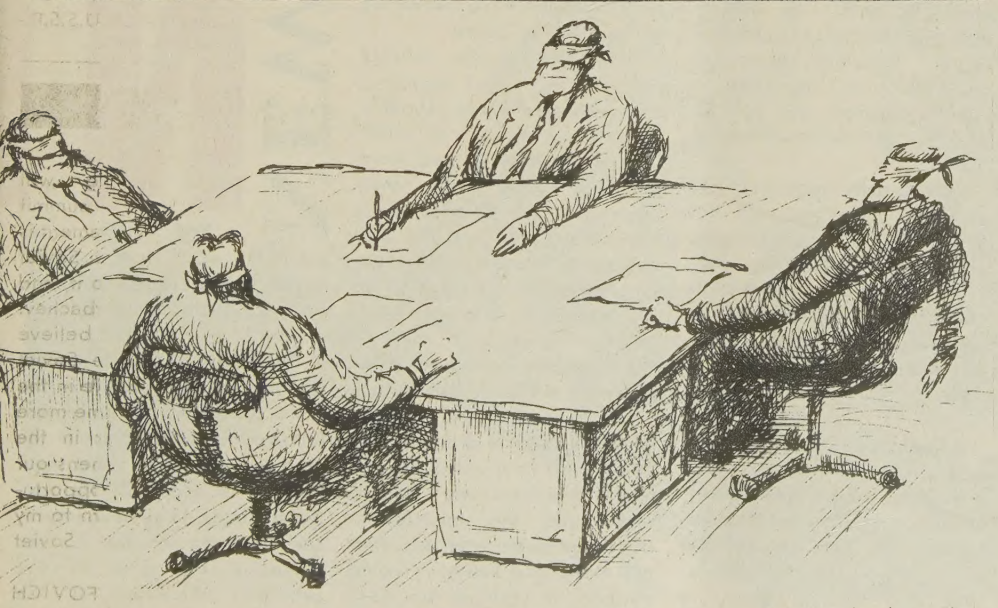
ADVICE

Not naive

I want to tell you that readers send their questions to New Times from all over the world because the capitalist press is trying to befuddle their minds by churning out heaps of lies about the Soviet Union. So please answer our questions, and don't consider them naive.

ADAMASTOR FERNANDES
Jundiai, Brazil

AN ARTIST'S COMMENT



A bureaucratic quartet. Drawing by Igor Shein

PERSONAL VIEW

HIGHLIGHT OF THE WEEK

BOHUSLAV CHNOUPEK, Foreign Minister of Czechoslovakia

The Soviet intermediate-range missiles are being evacuated from Czechoslovakia. This is, in my opinion, the main political event in Europe over the past few days.

I would like to thank the Soviet missilemen, who have honourably discharged their military duty.

The withdrawal of the first unit of mobile SS-22 missile launchers from Hranice-on-Morava, where they had been sited in response to the installation of American Pershing 2 and cruise missiles in Western Europoe, is seen by us as an important step by the Soviet Union on the road to a nuclear-free world.

This measure has been taken to speed up the implementation of the Soviet-American treaty on the elimination of medium- and shorter-range nuclear missiles. We regard it as an expression of the Soviet Union's dedication to peace, its sincere interest in disarmament, and at the same time as an example worthy of respect in the practice of international relations.

It is unusual that a state should begin to carry out a treaty before it has been ratified. The evacuation of the missiles coincided with the celebration in Czechoslovakia of the 40th anniversary of the February victory over reaction. In these memorable days the working people of Czechoslovakia demonstrated their profound dedication to peace and socialism, and simultaneously expressed confidence that the Soviet Union's programme of abolishing nuclear weapons will be carried out.

BERNHARD QUANDT, veteran of the labour movement, member of the Council of State, German Democratic Republic

I welcome the Soviet government's decision to pull out intermediate-range missiles from the German Democratic Republic. I regard it as a continuation of the unswerving Leninist policy of peace.

This policy expresses the desire of millions of people for peace, for more reliable security and a reduced threat of nuclear war, which has always been a goal of the working-class movement.

I tell those who fear that this decision could impair the defence potential of the socialist countries: we should trust the actions of the Soviet Union which has repeatedly stated that it will not allow NATO military superiority over the Warsaw Treaty states.

François Hoffmann, editor of the Luxembourg communist newspaper Zeitung vum Letzeburger Vollek, has visited the New Times offices. The Communist Party's newspaper is one of the four major dailies and has a circulation of 8,000, which is not small for a country with a population of 370,000. Incidentlly, the Democratic Party's newspaper has the same circulation. Zeitung is a daily 12-page newspaper with a Saturday supplement.

"We try to give our readers a broad panorama of events at home and abroad, especially in the socialist countries, interest in which is growing," François Hoffmann said. "The newspaper has only six people on its staff."

Public interest in the newspaper has been aroused by the suits brought against it by the World Anti-Communist League. The newspaper, which exposed this organization, braved the threat. In the past year it has carried 60 articles to substantiate the evidence published earlier. The court has turned down the suits. However, an appeal against one of its decisions will be considered in April.

"We greatly appreciate the solidarity expressed by the democratic public and fraternal publications, including New Times," François Hoffmann said, "and are determined to continue our struggle against anti-communism in all its forms."

* * *

Stuart Holland, a British MP and prominent Labour Party economics expert, Ken Coates, professor at Nottingham University and President of the anti-war Russell Peace Foundation, and Michael Brown, a scholar and chairman of the organization for the promotion of trade and business in developing countries, have visited the offices of New Times.

Their ideas in the field of restructuring world economic and political relations, set out in their conversation with members of the editorial staff, have found reflection in the latest appeal of the Russell Peace Foundation, an initiative for disarmament and development, counterposed by its authors to Washington's Strategic Defence Initiative.

Our guests expressed confidence that mankind's future would be determined not only by the process of disarmament, but also by how quickly politicians and ordinary people understood the interdependence between West and East and North and South. It would depend on whether we were able to understand that a way out of the critical military, economic and social situations could only be found by joint efforts.

The British guests are working out new models for cooperation between various political forces and ideologies at an international level, and new systems of economic ties between states. They have promised to write articles for the magazine on some of the problems discussed at the meeting.

AN EQUATION WITHOUT UNKNOWN QUANTITIES

New Times correspondent Konstantin Isakov talks to VICTOR KARPOV, chief of the Arms Limitation and Disarmament Department of the U.S.S.R. Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

New Times. While the INF treaty is still pending ratification by the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet and the U.S. Congress, with the world public looking on in eager anticipation, the Soviet Union has already started to pull out its medium-range missiles from the G.D.R. and Czechoslovakia. The new thinking has once again made itself felt in world politics. But is there a limit to good will?

Victor Karpov. Of course there is, and it is determined by the interests of the security of our country and that of our allies. We cannot go beyond this limit. But the Soviet Union has never refused to work actively within it.

The withdrawal of the SS-12 missiles from the territories of the G.D.R. and Czechoslovakia, along with launching installations and auxiliary equipment, which began on February 25 and will end in March, shows that the Soviet Union is remaining true to its course. This long-awaited withdrawal must become another brick in the edifice of our common European home. Readiness to promote its construction does not depend on whether at a given moment our partners are taking similar action. The situation is developing in such a way as to ensure that the INF treaty, judging by everything, will be ratified. And the Soviet government's decision proves that the U.S.S.R. is prepared to implement it.

N.T. A highlight in world events was U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz's first visit to Moscow in late February since the signing of the INF treaty, and the first one this year, in preparation for a Moscow summit. What would you say about the results of the talks?

V.K. I would say the main feature of the talks was that they were a logical extension of the Washington meeting between Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan, a follow-up of the line set out in the joint statement on its results. It is not only a question of preparing the agreements that could be described as a 50 per cent cut in strategic offensive weapons. There is a broader meaning: how can the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A., having started to reduce and eliminate nuclear arms, ensure strategic stability in relations between the two countries, and make this process irreversible?

For this it is essential that the 1972 ABM treaty, around which the entire process of limiting and cutting back the strategic arms of the two countries revolves, should remain in force in an unchanged form. Then, together with the Americans, we have to start thinking: what next? What should be the next step towards ensuring the continuation of the process of cooperation between the U.S.S.R. and the

Soviet operational-tactical missiles on their way out of the G.D.R.

ADN- TASS photo

U.S.A. in reducing the nuclear threat, abolishing chemical weapons and cutting back conventional arms? We saw the Secretary of State's visit as the touchstone of the American administration's intentions.

Before the visit, we were put on our guard by the behavior of the American delegation in Geneva. It was going back on many of the agreements reached in Washington. The impression was that the Americans had lost interest in the constructive preparation of the text of a SOA treaty and other documents needed for signing in Moscow. But the Secretary of State arrived in a somewhat different mood, one which I would describe as businesslike, as can be judged from the results of his talks with Mikhail Gorbachev and Eduard Shevardnadze.

On the whole his visit was useful. We discussed a wide range of regional and humanitarian problems. What is particularly important from the point of view of the future of our relations, in my opinion, is the Secretary of State's readiness to give full and concise legal form to the agreements reached in Washington - to observe the ABM treaty as it was signed in 1972 for an agreed term. Up till then the American delegation in Geneva had failed to take a constructive stand on this issue. The Moscow talks showed that our partners evidently are prepared in future to work in Geneva in a more businesslike spirit.

N.T. How would you explain the difference in the stand taken by Shultz and by the American delegation in Geneva? Is there anything behind that?

V.K. Of course, one could start surmising as to what lies behind the unconstructive stand taken by the American representatives in Geneva. But I think the key is not in the American delegation itself, but in the overall situation in the U.S. in a presidential election year. It is characterized by lack of clarity about the future, sometimes a deliberate ambiguity about the stand taken by the different political forces. It is also important for the U.S. administration, which links its hopes of carrying on its policy with the election of a Republican President, to know what is likely to help it and what is not. Apparently, since the Washington summit, serious changes have taken place in the Republican political kitchen which determines the further policy of the Republican Party. And that presumably led to Shultz receiving certain powers - for all we can hopefully tell. President Reagan's Washington Post interview of February 26 was at variance with what the Secretary of State had said. The President voiced his doubts whether there would be enough time to get the Strategic Offensive Arms treaty ready for signing during his Moscow visit, but did not strike this item off the agenda.

The INF treaty signed in Washington last December 8 is receiving increasing support in the United States. That is evident from the public opinion polls and the mood of the Senate. The small group of Senators that oppose it seems to be in isolation. Even some of the legislators who were initially sceptical or hostile to the treaty are now changing their attitude under pressure from the electorate.

N.T. Can one now hope for changes in the American position at the Geneva talks?

V.K. I think it would be premature to make any forecasts. The main criteria for us is whether any real progress is made within the next month, i.e., before the next meeting between the Soviet Foreign Minister and the American Secretary of State in Washington, whether or not we advance in the preparation of the draft agreements on SOA. If we lose this month, we can lose the chance of signing them.

N.T. The question of drafting a treaty on a 50 per cent reduction in strategic offensive arms (SOA) was touched on in the talks between General Secretary Gorbachev and Secretary of State Shultz. The view was expressed that such a treaty required much more complex verification procedures than those for the INF. Could you explain that?

V.K. Procedures for the verification of the liquidation of those armaments that are to be cut represent an objective difficulty as they cover much more ground than medium- and shorter-range missiles. Better inspection will be required. But given political will of the two sides, these questions can be resolved in keeping with each side's interests and to ensure the effectiveness of the treaty itself.

I should like to point out that the Gorbachev-Shultz talks touched on a whole series of questions of principled significance from the point of view of prospects of stability in Soviet-American relations. It is essential to do away with the atmosphere of mutual suspicion and mistrust which, it must be admitted, existed between us until recently. That can only be done through a combination of measures that would lead to reducing military confrontation and promoting greater trust and openness in relations between our two countries.

N.T. The ratification debates on the INF treaty in the U.S.S.R. and U.S.A. legislative bodies have aroused wide international discussion on the issue of European defence and possible changes in NATO strategy. In the West the idea of "compensation" is seen as the sole alternative, although there is not a word about it in the Washington agreements. And the Moscow talks showed that other possible solutions exist. So how should one view the idea of "compensation"? Is it a mere declaration, albeit a dangerous one, or is it taking practical shape?

V.K. I think the statements coming from the various NATO countries should be taken seriously. Behind them lie trends, often contradictory, but which could complicate the situation, particularly in Europe. The idea of "compensation" is basically wrong. But to say that the West is unanimous in its views and regards it as the sole alternative would be a mistake. We know of deep-lying differences in the assessment of the INF treaty in West European government circles. The elimination of two classes of nuclear weapon in Europe is an unprecedented event on our continent. Consequently there can be no precedent for the reaction of European governments. The problems of getting down to disarmament in practice have proved anything but easy for many West European politicians. But does that mean that an arms race is inevitable? Probably not. There are increasing signs that the plans for rearmament and "compensation" are not getting substantial support, particularly in the G.D.R., where the wish is being expressed not to be content with what had been achieved, but to go further.

In the ruling quarters of Federal Germany we are witnessing a determination to move ahead with the reduction and elimination of shorter-range nuclear weapons. The West German delegation at the Geneva Disarmament Conference is taking an active part in drafting a convention on the banning and abolition of chemical weapons. The question has been raised of carrying out the agreement reached earlier to remove American chemical weapons from West German soil. Yet only recently it would have been hard to imagine Bonn making such a move.

Other trends, too, are noticeable. France, for example, is especially concerned about the fate of its own nuclear arsenal. Differences are to be observed among the political forces at the Vienna talks, where 23 NATO and Warsaw Treaty countries are drawing up a mandate for talks on a reduction in conventional armaments and armed forces in Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals.

N.T. Could you give us some idea of what to expect at the talks in Vienna in the future?

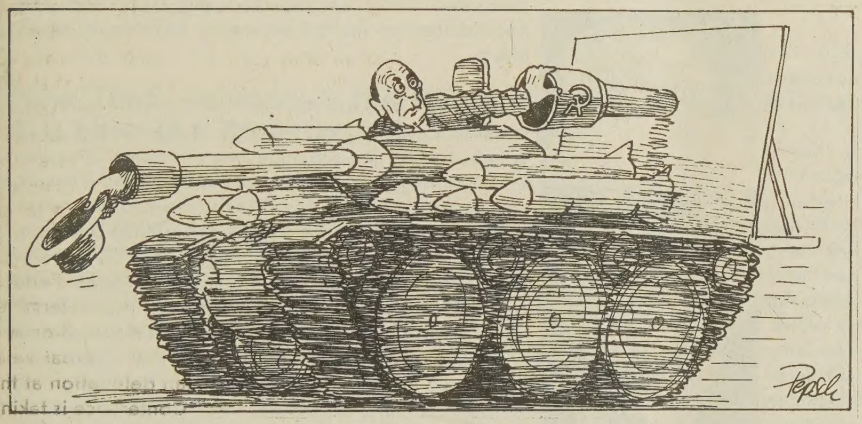
V.K. For a start, as the Soviet Union is suggesting, the conference could consider the elimination of all imbalances in conventional armaments and armed forces and then to bring them down to a level that would rule out any possibility of offensive operations. Such a course of

events, taken in conjunction with the abolition of shorter-range nuclear weapons, would change the situation on the continent, making it entirely different from what we have today. That frightens some people.

A number of issues have already been agreed on at the Vienna consultations. For instance, the aim of the talks has been defined. But there remain questions on the differences that still have to be ironed out. The main one is on the subject covered by the talks. As military technology in the field of conventional armaments advances, things have reached a stage where the greater part of the arsenals of the NATO and Warsaw Treaty countries consists of dual-purpose weapons (some less so, others more). Take artillery. Starting from 152-mm guns, both conventional and nuclear shells can be used. The tactical air force can also carry both types. And it looks as if it will soon be possible to equip tanks with nuclear artillery. So the classic concept of conventional weapons no longer holds. The Warsaw Treaty countries want all armaments that could use both conventional and nuclear shells to be covered by the talks. The official NATO stand (although differences in individual views exist) is that no mention of nuclear weapons should be made in the mandate. The French are particularly active on this issue. They regard all their nuclear weapons as strategic or pre-strategic rather than shorter-range. Therefore, in their view, they should not be a subject of negotiations. In my opinion, other NATO representatives are using the French position as a pretext for delaying the drafting of a mandate.

The task now is to find a reasonable compromise between extreme points of view. That is what the Warsaw Treaty countries are trying to do. We have agreed that the nuclear component, i.e., the shells and nuclear bombs, should at this stage be left out of the mandate now being prepared. It would authorize the participants in the talks to reduce only the carriers. As for the nuclear components, they could be the subject of separate talks. In principle, the West agrees to such an approach. All that is now needed is a mutually-acceptable formula.

There are also problems pertaining to the zone to which reductions would apply. For instance, would island territories be included or, say, the Asian part of Turkey? We also have to establish the connection with Stockholm-2, that is, the follow-up of the Conference on Confidence and Security-Building Measures and Disarmament in Europe, with the talks of the 23 NATO and Warsaw Treaty countries.



A Forwärts (F.R.G.) cartoonist's view of how the bogey of the Soviet threat influences the NATO countries' military budgets.

N.T. What do you think of the talks, likewise in Vienna, that have been under way for almost 15 years on a reduction of armed forces and armaments in Central Europe? Are they still going on?

V.K. They are still alive, and it would be wrong to discount them. The questions they are discussing are of considerable significance for Central Europe, where the confrontation of the blocs is felt most. Of course the absence of progress and prospects for agreement do warrant concern, in view of the preparation of new talks embracing all of Europe. But we hope that the drafting of a mandate for European talks will touch on the centre of the continent as well. So it seems that some way of combining the two will be found.

N.T. The magazine receives a great many letters from both Soviet and foreign readers who are worried that the Soviet Union, now busy cutting back on nuclear missiles, might have lost its vigilance with regard to SDI. What would you say to them?

V.K. The question of SDI is really a question of what the United States wants from the point of view of strategic stability in our relations, whether it wants a continuation of the arms race or a lower level of nuclear confrontation; whether it wants the problems connected with surprise attacks, war as a result of technical mishaps or miscalculations removed from the agenda. The SDI programme is an index of how seriously the United States takes the Soviet Union.

And the American administration has taken an ambiguous stand. On the one hand, Washington wants agreement on a 50 per cent cut in strategic offensive arms and understands that this cannot be achieved without abiding by the ABM treaty. This understanding was reflected in the Washington agreements and during Mr Shultz's visit to Moscow. But on the other hand, the American President, who put forward the idea of SDI back in 1983, has painted himself into a corner on the issue. So some tactical manoeuvring is going to be necessary, for it is recognized that unless the implementation of SDI is suspended for a sufficiently long time, there will be neither strategic offensive arms reduction nor stability in our relations. The "star wars" programme is certainly a major element in the strategic equation of Soviet-American relations. There is another element as well - the possible countermeasures we may take to SDI. The response could be asymmetrical, making the programme worthless from the military point of view. But we should not like to get involved in a wasteful SDI-anti-SDI race. It would be much more sensible and promising to pursue the course of reducing and eliminating nuclear weapons, excluding them altogether from the strategic equation.

In other words, we are not becoming less vigilant about SDI. But we do believe that compliance with the ABM treaty will make it possible to put through intermediary measures that will bring about greater stability. And when a 50 per cent cut is made in strategic offensive weapons, when the new situation has emerged, then one can better assess the prospects of strategic relations between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. We are convinced that the key to a system of relations capable of ensuring peace and cooperation between our two countries, to an all-embracing system of peace and security, lies in carrying on the nuclear disarmament process, eliminating other weapons of mass destruction, reducing troops and armaments - rather than adding a new dimension to the arms race. This is the road to follow till the end of the century - and further on.

SEPARATE DEALS AGAIN

EVGENY KORSHUNOV

Shultz's mission: nothing new

The Middle East conflict has been a focal point in international politics for almost forty years. This is not surprising: any aggravation in the region is fraught with dangerous consequences for the world at large.

Today universal attention is riveted on two events: the popular uprising on the Israeli-occupied territories (the West Bank of river Jordan and the Gaza Strip) and the visit by U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz to the Middle East.

The two events are closely connected: the Palestinian uprising has assumed such proportions and become such an important factor politically that Washington has been compelled to give up its persistent attempts to ignore it and put its "heavy artillery" into play. Shultz's trip to the Middle East was presented by U.S. official circles in intriguing terms so as to give it maximum publicity. It was announced, on the other hand, that the United States was getting down to implementing its "new initiative" in the Middle East; but on the other, the nature of Shultz's diplomatic mission was kept secret. True, some scraps of information were deliberately "leaked," the idea being, above all, to obstruct developments in connection with the Palestinian uprising that are detrimental to American-Israeli plans in the Middle East. Washington suggested that the Palestinians and the peoples of other Arab countries should quieten down and rely on the new American peace initiative which Shultz was about to submit to the Middle East. Naturally, political circles in the countries of the region wondered, well before his arrival, just how new the initiative was. Whatever was to be gleaned from the U.S. papers' scanty reports on it suggested that the American "new political initiative for the Middle East" was not new at all. All it amounted to was a rehash of the notorious Camp David accords which, instead of offering a radical and profound solution to the problems underlying the Middle East conflict, were about separate deals and half-way measures.

I remember the Western (for the most part American) papers enthusing wildly over the signing of the Camp David accords by President Anwar Sadat of Egypt and Prime Minister Menachem Begin of Israel in September 1978.

Now, a decade later, it is only too obvious that the positions of those who publicized these accords as a sure way of ending the Arab-Israeli conflict have failed the test of time.

It's true that relations between Egypt and Israel have since been normalized. The Sinai Peninsula has been returned to Egypt. Nevertheless, the U.S. "peace initiative" has further aggravated the Middle East conflict. It envisaged negotiations with "representatives" of the Palestinian people on the granting of limited autonomy under Israeli occupation and, several years after that, negotiations on the future of the West Bank and Gaza. The Palestinian people and their sole legitimate representative - the Palestine Liberation Organization - have flatly rejected the Camp David sop, and negotiations on limited autonomy have never taken place.

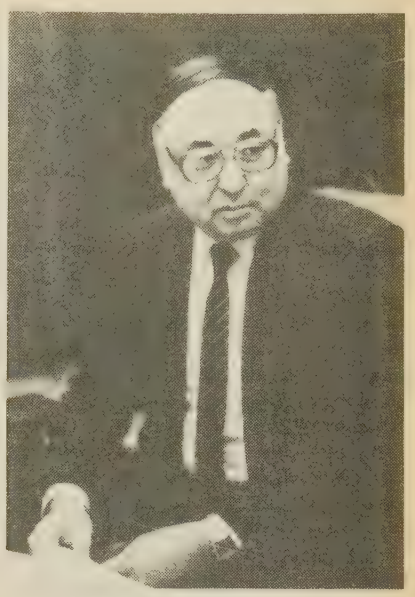
To break the will of the Palestinians, Tel Aviv, backed by Washington, tried to smash the PLO, which inspires and organizes the resistance struggle. This was the purpose of the full-scale Israeli invasion of Lebanon, where the PLO's main bases were located at the time. The aggression against Lebanon, launched in 1982, and the routing of the PLO were to pave the way for more separate deals and negotiations on limited "Palestinian autonomy." After Tel Aviv had failed to achieve its political aims by force of arms, it seemed to forget the "Palestinian problem," hoping to solve it de facto by perpetuating the occupation. But current events on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip have dashed these hopes. Tel Aviv and Washington are now trying to get out of the impasse.

It is for this purpose that the U.S. Secretary of State has flown to the Middle East. According to Associated Press, the "new American peace initiative" envisages early self-government for one and a half million Palestinians on the West Bank and the Gasa Strip and a resumption of talks on a comprehensive settlement between Israel, Jordan and the Palestinians in December of this year.

In other words, the aim remains the same - separate deals and partial solutions. No wonder that the Palestinians and the leaders of Arab countries visited by Shultz turned down the "new" proposals. Nor did they satisfy Israeli Premier Shamir, who is still resolved to continue the occupation of the Palestinian territories and maintain the status quo by military force. However, even the advocates of the Camp David deal are now compelled to seek a way out of the deadlock.

Such a way out lies in an international U.N.-sponsored conference with the participation of all interested parties, including the PLO. The idea of holding it has met with widespread support throughout the world.

TIME OF DECISION



New Times interviews the Prime Minister of Afghanistan, SULTAN ALI KESHTMAND.

Another round of Afghan-Pakistani talks is due to begin in Geneva, through the mediation of Diego Cordovez, the representative of U.N. Secretary-General. What do you expect from this round?

Since the naming of a possible date and deadline for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan in the statements of the Soviet and Afghan leaders Mikhail Gorbachev and Najibullah, we have come very close to signing the almost completed documents on an Afghan settlement. At any rate, our side is ready to sign them. But, unfortunately, Islamabad is setting new conditions, apparently under the influence of the American administration. This also reflects the Pakistani authorities' own ambitious stand. The conditions concern the purely internal affairs of the Afghan people - the formation of a coalition government, a government, strange as it may seem, that would suit Pakistan's interests. So how can one describe this as other than a pretext for torpedoing the Geneva agreements? Moreover, it is undisguised interference in the internal affairs of our country, the sort of interference the Geneva agreements are designed to put an end to.

You mentioned a coalition government, could you say how things stand at present in this respect?

Last year, following the launching of its policy of national reconciliation, the Afghan government proposed - and reiterated this proposal on many occasions - to form an all-Afghan coalition that would also include patriotic-minded opposition forces and groupings to be represented in the government and other supreme and local bodies of power. We are still offering our hand to all Afghans. But no one, I would say, has real grounds, nor the right to present us with an ultimatum, or dictate conditions.

I repeat, we have long been ready for dialogue. We lay no claim to a monopoly of power, and are prepared to share it. On the other hand, we recognize no claims to monopolizing power in our country.

Could you sum up some of the results of the policy of national reconciliation?

The policy of national reconciliation proclaimed a year ago to end the bloodshed on Afghan soil is a process. And like any other process, it takes time; it cannot bring immediate results. It is far from being a simple process. It has many supporters, but it also has its opponents and open enemies, both inside and outside the country.

Just over a year has passed. We believe that the policy of national reconciliation is advancing sufficiently successfully and producing increasingly beneficial results. Contacts have been established with a large number of commanders of anti-government armed units. Many of them have taken the path of reconciliation and are participating in the work of different bodies of local government. Others have not yet agreed to cooperate, but are abstaining from active armed struggle. It should not be thought that all opposition groups obey the extremist leaders of the seven-party alliance based in Peshawar (Pakistan) or share their irreconcilable stand. That is far from being the case. Quite a number of people are now coming from Peshawar to see what is happening in our country for themselves.

Some of them believe for some reason that the success of the policy of reconciliation hinges solely on our relations with the seven-party alliance. But that relationship is only part, a single aspect of the problem.

What is particularly important is the effect the policy of national reconciliation has had inside the country, and the response it has evoked among those who live here. That response has been a very positive one. For people know that the political leadership of Afghanistan is prepared to compromise with the other side and with all opposing forces, in order to come to a sensible mutually-acceptable settlement of all our Afghan affairs, and put an end to the war which is inflicting such immense damage on the country.

Could you give an idea of this damage?

We put the damage and destruction inflicted on state property alone at 60 billion afghanis. You can easily imagine what that means for our already backward economy. And the damage incurred by the population from bandit attacks directed from abroad? That is truly incalculable. And how does one measure the cost in human lives?

Yet, despite all this, we are ready for reconciliation in order to stop the bloodshed as quickly as possible.

Psychologically, this is, of course, hard. Some people ask how we can sit down at the same table with those who killed our near ones. But all Afghans should understand that this is simply essential in the interests of national politics and saving our nation. That is why mutual tolerance must be displayed and each other's interests taken into account. That is why

we offer a coalition, a multi-party system. But of course no one should set up insuperable obstacles or impose ultimatums.

And what was the reaction of the refugees , the ordinary people, to the Moscow and Kabul initiatives that opened the way to a settlement of the Afghan conflict?

One can state with certainty that, broadly speaking, they welcomed the decisions agreed on by the Soviet and Afghan governments and set out in the statements of Mikhail Gorbachev and Najibullah on the timetable for the withdrawal of Soviet troops, as these removed the last obstacle to the signing of the agreements on Afghanistan in Geneva. One can judge their spontaneous reaction from the fact that in expectation of the establishment of peace and their early return home they rushed to exchange their money - dollars and Pakistani rupees - for afghanis. As a result of this boom, the exchange rate of the dollar dropped by 48 afghanis in three days in the refugee area. When we heard and other channels to change their foreign currency at home on their return, as it was needed by the state treasury.

At the same time, it should be underlined that the people inside the country are linking the withdrawal of Soviet troops with international guarantees that foreign interference in Afghan affairs will be stopped and no more weapons supplied to anti-government extremist groupings.

The return of the refugees following the signing of the Geneva agreements will clearly pose a whole series of problems for your government: they will have to be fed, provided with work and roofs over their heads....

Naturally, many difficult problems will arise. The Council of Ministers recently passed a decision to prepare to receive a million refugees. We already have some experience in this field, as in the first year of the policy of national reconciliation more than 100,000 refugees returned, despite the obstacles they faced on the other side of the border. The overwhelming majority of these have been settled, mostly in the areas where they lived formerly. And the Soviet Union provided us with material assistance for this purpose.

And how do things stand with regard to providing returning refugees with land?

Last year a law was adopted under which they are returned the land they owned before. But if it has been redistributed under the agrarian reform among other peasants, then the government makes an equal amount available from state land reserves.

March 20th marks the end of the year 1366 in the Muslim Calendar. The end of a year is usually a time for taking stock. What are the year's economic results?

On the whole, not bad. A short while ago the Council of Ministers summed up the fulfilment of the economic plan and budget for ten months of the year. I would say the results are fairly good, in spite of the continuing undeclared war and all the difficulties and hardships it brings. Our plans are being fulfilled in many spheres. Not in all, but in many. In some spheres we are lagging behind.

In which spheres are things going better, in which less so?

In the state sector we first achieved and then surpassed - by over 6 per cent - prerevolutionary industrial output. In agriculture, things are not so good, though tolerable. But the cotton crop has fallen off. About a month ago a national Jirgah of peasant representatives was held in Mazari-Sharif, at which we announced the steps being taken to stimulate agricultural production. For instance, purchasing prices of cotton have been doubled. We hope that will help to increase our cotton production.

Another important line in our economic activities, which is being developed alongside the policy of national reconciliation and designed to boost it, is support and encouragement for the development of the private sector.

But you have never infringed on it.

Never. But now we are doing our utmost to encourage private enterprise and give it every assistance. We are seeking to provide more opportunities for the investment of capital, especially in the manufacturing industry - the light and food industries, as well as in construction.

The Soviet Union is helping us in this. It has begun cooperating with the Afghan private sector and setting up joint ventures. Sixty per cent of the capital in such enterprises will be in the hands of private owners, and for the other 40 per cent the Soviet Union is offering credits and supplying equipment and technology. Contracts have already been signed for the setting up of 50 such joint enterprises in different parts of the country. Bicycles are already being produced and marketed. Nine bakeries will start production in the next month or two. Then textile and fur factories are to be opened. Other socialist countries are also displaying interest in such joint ventures, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Hungary, for instance.

And what message have you for New Times readers?

I've been a reader of your magazine for - let me think - yes, thirty years and have on a number of occasions contributed to it. This time I should again like to wish for the further strengthening of the friendly fraternal relations between our countries and peoples. ■

The entire history of Syria has been one of struggle - against the crusaders, Ottoman rule, French colonialists, Israeli aggression, and domestic reactionaries.

The full independence achieved in 1946, after foreign troops had at last been evacuated, did not bring peace and prosperity to the nation. Power remained in the hands of the bourgeoisie and landowners and their traditional parties. Coups were frequently staged, leading to the replacement of governments. Meanwhile, the condition of the working people did not change for the better. Economic troubles, and pro-Western tendencies in the policy of the national leadership, caused growing discontent.

A bloodless coup

On March 8, 1963, the political struggle culminated in a military coup in Damascus. It was a bloodless but, nevertheless, revolutionary coup because it dealt a crushing blow to the landowners and the bourgeoisie and brought new social forces to power. The current President, Hafez al-Assad, was one of those who took part in that coup.

The Arab Socialist Renaissance (Baath) Party assumed the reins of government. Founded in 1947, the Baath Party expressed the interests of the petty bourgeoisie, the middle strata in town and country, revolutionary intellectuals, and progressive army officers.

In its documents the party notes with pride that it is the first revolutionary party in the Arab world to have taken power and headed the state and the people with the aim of abolishing the old and building a new society.

However, the seeds of future discord were contained in the very composition of the ruling party. It was extremely heterogeneous. One part of the membership adhered to the ideas of scientific socialism, while the other part formed a reformist-nationalist group with rightist leanings.

On February 23, 1966, the revolutionary-democratic forces of the army removed the right-wing leadership of the party from power. Much of the credit for the victory of the February 23 Movement, as it has been called in Syria since then, goes to Hafez al-Assad, who was commander of the Syrian air force at the time. He was ordered to occupy Damascus, block the roads leading to it, and capture the radio and television centre.

The February 23 Movement triumphed, and the nation followed the course of progressive changes with greater confidence. Nevertheless, when the anniversary of the revolution is observed today, the Rectification Movement of November 16, 1970, is more frequently mentioned in Syria.

STAYING THE COURSE

25th anniversary of the revolution

The hard road to truth

Revolution is always a quest and a test, and mistakes are possible where no universal recipes exist. In the past, the Arab Socialist Renaissance Party fought against right-wing deviation. Later, it had to rectify leftist extremes.

Pseudo-revolutionary talk prevailed in the practical activity of the party, and good slogans were not implemented. At the same time, there were excesses in economic and social policy, in particular on the issue of nationalization. The slogan, "an armed people's war," not only against Israel but also against all "reactionary Arab regimes," was widespread, and led to the isolation of Syria.

The discord in the leadership was exacerbated during clashes between the forces of the Palestinian Resistance Movement and the army of King Hussein in Jordan in September 1970. The Baath leaders sent Syrian troops to support the Palestinians in the armed conflict.

It was in such circumstances that the Rectification Movement began. Hafez al-Assad, then defence minister, put the troops of the Damascus garrison on the alert and deposed some Baath leaders who refused to come to a compromise. He became general secretary of the Arab Socialist Renaissance Party and President of the republic. The Baath, Communist and other progressive parties set up the National Progressive Front. Their representatives formed the People's Council (the supreme legislative body), the government and bodies of local self-government which express the interests of the broad mases.

The path of the revolution has been long and hard over the past 25 years, searching for truth in a situation where tragic misfortunes have befallen the country: the Israeli aggression of 1967, leading to the occupation of a part of Syria; the war of October 1973; the events of 1979, when Moslem extremists organized a series of terrorist actions. Nor did the West miss the opportunity to launch propaganda campaigns against Syria or to complicate its economic position. In the autumn of 1986, Great Britain, the United States and some other Western states introduced economic and diplomatic sanctions against Syria with a view to creating difficulties in the country. Western politicians objected to the consistent anti-imperialist course it had pursued since the revolution.

View of the Euphrates hydropower station built with Soviet assistance.

Multifarious aid

But Syria has withstood all its trials. Its people have achieved successes they could not even have dreamed of a quarter of a century ago. However, the republic is still faced with many problems. One of them, and a very serious one, is the Israeli occupation of part of its territory. Nevertheless, every time I visit Syria I feel the spirit of optimism, the creative and dynamic progress of the republic. Neither in its living standards nor in its economic indices can Syria any longer be considered an underdeveloped country.

Many of the industrial plants built with the assistance of the Soviet Union, and its multifarious aid, have enabled the republic to make great strides and hold firm in the struggle against its external enemies.

Over the past 25 years, friendship between the two countries has embraced practically all fields of our relations. "The strengthening of these ties accords with the will of our people," Hafez al-Assad said in one of his addresses to the party and the nation. "The colonialists and imperialists should not hope to be able to shake our mutual trust. The Soviet Union is a genuine friend of all peoples fighting for freedom and in dependence."

The CPSU and the Arab Socialist Renaissance Party are actively cooperating. Mutual visits by leaders of the two countries are giving a new impetus to the promotion of our friendship.

Achievements are usually reviewed and summed up when an anniversary is observed. In this case, however, it is too early to sum up. The work continues for the benefit of our two peoples.

OLEG FOMIN

TOWARDS ACCORD

The first ever meeting of the foreign ministers of all the Balkan countries has taken place in Belgrade.

Any regional forum intended to promote international trust and understanding merits the approval and support of the world community. All the more so if the region in question has seen more wars than negotiations throughout its troubled history.

The situation in the Balkan Peninsula (area: 1.5 million sq km, population: over 100 million) is unique, from the political standpoint in particular. The region has countries with different social systems; both members of rival military-political alliances, and non-aligned states.

The Balkans have had more than their share of wars - big and small, long and short. It was not through its own fault, however, that the peninsula gained the unenviable reputation of being the "powder keg" of Europe.

But times change. Since World War II, the Balkans have had the longest spell of peace in their history. This does not mean that the time of strife is past. Contradictions - violent and delicate, inevitable and induced - still abound there. They involve practically all the countries of the region.

The idea of holding the meeting emerged from the Balkan peoples' and governments' awareness of the need to start a constructive dialogue in the interests of understanding and security.

The meeting was proposed by Yugoslavia last spring. The fact that the proposal met with the Balkan countries' unanimous support is in itself significant. The meeting was not only the first of its kind since World War II, but since the formation of the states concerned. Previously, all sorts of obstacles had prevented them from entering into negotiations. Today the nations of the region are concentrating on what they have in common rather than on what divides them.

The Belgrade meeting was of an all-Balkan character. Albania's consenting to take part in the forum was regarded as an important development. Until now, the P.S.R.A. had refrained from promoting multilateral political contacts in the region. Addressing a discussion in the Yugoslav capital, Foreign Minister Reis Malile said that the Albanian government supported all constructive proposals that could contribute towards a healthier climate in the Balkans and promote the cause of peace, stability and security in the region.

The states participating in the forum worked out a very flexible agenda. The idea was to create a more favourable atmosphere in relations between the Balkan states by seeking opportunities for multilateral cooperation wherever practicable and called for by mutual interests and requirements. In the participants' opinion, the most promising areas in this respect are trade, industrial coproduction and specialization, power engineering, transport, agriculture, environment protection, science, culture, sport and tourism. At their meeting in 1976, experts named 162 likely fields of cooperation among Balkan states.

So far, however, this is only a possibility. In the past, multilateral contacts between Balkan states were established arbitrarily, on the whole, at regular international conferences of experts. Opportunities offered by cooperation - in the economic sphere, in particular - remained unused.

It was pointed out at the Belgrade meeting that such cooperation could also provide an important stimulus to the strengthening of contacts in other spheres. So far the share of any one Balkan state in the region's total foreign trade turnover constitutes - at an estimate of the Yugoslav magazine Medjunarodna Politika - from 0.5 to 1.2 per cent, despite short distances and excellent roads. The advantages offered by border trade are not being fully exploited. Such advanced forms of economic cooperation as joint enterprises, long-term coproduction and joint operations on third countries' markets are not being used, with rare exceptions.

Another problem, a political one, settling which is in the supreme interests of the entire region, is to make the Balkans a zone free of nuclear and chemical weapons, a zone of peace and security. The foreign ministers of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania and Yugoslavia approved the idea of nuclear-free Balkan Peninsula. The discussion showed that the peoples of the region were increasingly aware of the need to be rid of chemical and nuclear weapons. This idea has its opponents, who claim that denuclearization would put the security of this or that Balkan state in jeopardy. This argument does not seem convincing. The region cannot stand aloof from the positive processes under way in Europe and the world at a time when the trend towards understanding and accord is becoming increasingly strongly pronounced.

It was pointed out at the Belgrade forum that the question of a nuclear-free zone could be a subject of discussion at a Balkan summit which, the participants of the Belgrade discussion agreed, would extend and enrich the process initiated in the Yugoslav capital. No specific dates were set for the summit. This is understandable: if the summit is to be a prominent milestone in progress towards close relations between the Balkan states, it must be thoroughly prepared. The stage for the summit can best be set by tangible results in multilateral cooperation and by the favourable atmosphere such cooperation creates.

It is important to ensure the continuity

of the Balkan dialogue. Most of the participants favoured holding regular meetings of the region's foreign ministers.

Disputed issues in bilateral relations were not on the agenda of the Belgrade meeting, lest the discussion should stray from matters of common interest and the participants become involved in mutual recrimination. This does not mean, however, that the ministers decided to ignore the lessons of the past and turn a blind eye to pressing problems. International relations in the Balkan Peninsula are intricate and sensitive. A characteristic feature of the situation in the region is the large number of national minorities. This causes all sorts of friction. The Belgrade meeting offered an example of how to avoid conflict.

Relations between individual countries were the subject of bilateral discussions in Belgrade. The talks between Budimir Loncar, the S.F.R.Y.'s Federal Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and Reis Malile, his Albanian opposite number, went off in an atmosphere of mutual understanding. Top-ranking Bulgarian and Yugoslav diplomats discussed ways of broadening bilateral cooperation in all spheres. The Bulgarian and Turkish foreign ministers recorded the results of their meeting in a protocol which opens up new vistas for the development of relations between the two countries.

Although they did not of course smooth away all the difficulties, these bilateral contacts - and the meeting as a whole - went a long way towards creating a climate conducive to the development of cooperation and the gradual settlement of disputes. This is certainly a major achievement of the Belgrade meeting.

Incidentally, long before the forum, the very idea of the Balkan dialogue had a positive effect on the situation in the region. Some developments that augur well for the future took place there.

The ending of the state of war between Greece and Albania went to show that mistrust - even if it persists for decades - can be dispelled by peaceful political means. Reemerging onto the international political scene, Albania has established closer relations with a number of countries.

At the end of January prime ministers Andreas Papandreou of Greece and Turgut Özal of Turkey held talks in Davos, Switzerland, with a view to improving relations between the two countries, which had repeatedly verged on the brink of armed conflict over the past few years. "Make peace, not war is the message from Davos," Andreas Papandreou said. "The overcoming of the differences between Greece and Turkey is in the interests of both nations, in the interests of

The Belgrade Palace of Congresses, Sava-Centre, where the Balkan foreign ministers met in conference

TASS photo

development and goodneighbourliness. This may bring peace to the region... Abandoning the stereotypes of the past will take time, however..."

The Greek Prime Minister's visit to Bulgaria on the eve of the Belgrade meeting was an important new initiative taken by Bulgaria and Greece in the interests of all the Balkan states. The leaders of the two countries favoured measures to eliminate tactical nuclear weapons from all points at which they are deployed in the Balkans and demanded that all the Balkan nations should commit themselves not to deploy new nuclear weapons on their territories. They called on other Balkan states to support and act on these demands.

The joint communiqué issued by the Belgrade meeting stressed the need to hold regular meetings of experts of the Balkan countries' foreign ministries. The first such meeting could be held in Sofia in 1988 to coordinate further initiatives in all fields, including the initiative to convene another meeting at foreign ministerial level.

It was suggested that finance or foreign trade ministers should meet in Turkey this year. The Belgrade forum also recommended holding a meeting of transport ministers before this year is out. Another suggested meeting, to be held in Romania, could discuss possibilities of cooperation in the field of industrial production, exchanges of technologies included. A second meeting of government experts on the problems of protecting the environment in the Balkan countries was scheduled to take place in Bulgaria in 1988. The Belgrade meeting noted the importance of the establishment of the Balkan economic cooperation research institute in Athens.

In an interview granted to a New Times correspondent, Pyotr Mladenov, the Bulgarian Foreign Minister, summed up the results of the forum as follows:

"The Belgrade meeting was a success, I think, to some extent it even surpassed our expectations. The joint communiqué mapped out guidelines for further actions aimed at extending the pan-Balkan dialogue, promoting trust and good-neighbourliness, and outlined concrete measures and moves for the furthering of cooperation.

"I view the Belgrade meeting in the light of the current change for the better in international relations which has become especially manifest since the signing of the Soviet-American treaty on eliminating two classes of nuclear weapon. I think it is safe to claim that the active and fruitful dialogue in the Yugoslav capital reflects, to some extent, the enormous impact of new political thinking on world progress.

"The Belgrade forum," the P.R.B. Foreign Minister stressed, "has shown that the Balkans have not shut themselves up in their own shell, which is impossible. We are part of Europe. I think that the Belgrade meeting has made a major contribution towards a peaceful Europe."

* * *

The Belgrade meeting of foreign ministers did not (and indeed could not) resolve the region's numerous problems, contradictions and disputes. Nevertheless, it gave an impulse to the development and deepening of cooperation in spheres of mutual interest. It has shown that new political thinking is gaining ground in the Balkans, too. The meeting has borne witness to the Balkan states' eagerness to do their utmost to ensure that no one has grounds for referring to the Balkans as a "powder keg."

VLADIMIR GRISHNY,
our own correspondent,
and GENNADY SYSOYEV

European realities

DANIIL PROEKTOR, D.Sc. (History)

Europe's military image over the last decade has been one of batteries of missiles targeted on the other side. Will it be possible to transform this image in the immediate future?

Numerous developments have led us to believe that fundamentally new realities are evolving in Europe. The process is as yet far from complete, but it is quite possible that at some time in the future these realities will have a decisive effect on European and world development.

Reality number one is that there are many contradictions in Europe. But there are none that Europeans would be willing to resolve through war.

In the context of the present balance of world forces and strategic parity, no serious political leader in either West or East can risk settling political questions by armed force. Everyone is aware of what the consequences of such an attempt would be. The competition between the two systems is increasingly being conducted in the ideological, political, economic and ethical spheres. At the same time, the functions and characteristics of the armed forces are undergoing a change.

We are indeed confronted with a unique situation. The point is that while modern weaponry spells mutual destruction, there is an awareness of this fundamental fact both in Eastern and Western Europe. Both sides share the view that any European policy can only properly be called such if it rejects the concept of its own continuation by other than peaceful means, i.e., nuclear war.

If such a war should break out, all political categories will simply cease to exist.

Herein lies the novelty of the situation. This is not easy to understand immediately. For instance, it is difficult to grasp certain new phenomena, such as the disappearance of the cause and effect relationship between war and revolution, and the emergence of an objective limit to class confrontation in the international arena. This limit is the threat of universal destruction. It appears that this limit has emerged in Europe and it rules out the use of weaponry and armed force as an instrument in the political struggle. In the new situation we have been compelled to put all-human interests before those of individual classes. This has made it imperative to reject the use of

armed force in politics and invalidated the Clausewitz formula to the effect that "war is a continuation of policy by other means."

There is no denying that the stockpiles of the latest weapons accumulated in Europe, which are a tragic outgrowth of the postwar period, have acquired absurd dimensions. As a result, militarization has become politically purposeless. Europe is ready for disarmament. Armaments should be reduced to what is termed a level of reasonable sufficiency. It is true that this level has not yet been defined in concrete terms. Nonetheless, everyone knows what it means. This is a qualitatively new concept of disarmament, which accords with the desire for an absolutely new concept of security (that exists only in the form of ideas): for "non-offensive defence." Does this seem fantastic? But we, and the whole of our amazing world, have witnessed the rapid transformation of seemingly fantastic ideas into realities, such as the signing of a treaty on the elimination of two classes of nuclear missiles.

Finally, it is also a **reality** that Europe is only a part of a single and interconnected world. The European states are being drawn into closer and closer interaction with each other as well as with countries on other continents. In other words, within the framework of an increasingly unified and small world there is no room for an isolated Europe.

Europe is seriously struggling with problems that have long been seen as all-human problems. These are problems of growing populations, increasing urbanization, the saving and development of energy resources, the social and ethical consequences of scientific and technological progress – biogenetics, biotechnology and medicine included – and of the effect of the eruption of information technology on the European community. All these problems are now in view, and to solve them an increased pooling of efforts will be required. Europeans are paying attention to moral and ethical problems, including those of religious ethics, as their continent is a centre of many faiths. Europe must also become a centre of new thinking, and should link the past with the present and future in this rapidly changing world.

The solution of global problems should also benefit Europe. Sooner or later the difficult, even seemingly insolvable, questions harassing Europe will be settled. There will be a time when such questions will "melt" into common needs. They will simply fade away into the past as did the political crises over Fashoda, Alsace-Lorraine and Eupen-et-Malmédy, which are remembered only by historians. However, a never-ending succession of new problems to be resolved will arise.

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There have never been any insolvable situations in the history of Europe. It is true that they were resolved in different ways, sometimes peacefully, though in most cases through wars. Today Europe has no alternative to peace. Therefore peace over a long period of time is a much more likely solution than war to European contradictions.

Nobody can tell how long it will take Europe to switch over to new thinking. Nobody knows whether or not the transition will be a smooth one. But the present era of confrontation between the two social systems, which is manifest in the grim buildup of military forces in the heart of Europe, should gradually be followed by a period of peaceful competition and cooperation between East and West. The latter will help remove the intolerable burden of militarization and protracted political propaganda warfare.

They say that not everything is simple in Europe. This is true. However, it is also true that it can never be simple anywhere. The purpose of politics is to find the right solutions. As far as policies of European security are concerned, there are many factors, including some that are not simple, that give rise to anxiety. Among these are the persistent efforts of NATO's European member states constantly to modernize their weapons and armed forces, and their blustering demands to compensate for the elimination of two classes of American missiles, the emphasis on the military aspects of West European integration; and the buildup of the nuclear potentials of Great Britain and France – a step which is in striking contrast with the forthcoming elimination of Soviet and American missiles. We are also concerned about the difficulties in the talks on the elimination of chemical weapons, in the Vienna consultations and other painful questions of European politics. We are aware of those issues that are a source of concern to our Western partners, namely economic security and the Soviet military potential. There are several others as well.

Aware of these difficulties, we should not overdramatize them. Unfortunately, certain quarters in Europoe have indulged in dramatizing difficulties, misrepresenting the other side's intentions, supervigilance and attempts to frighten others and themselves. This experience has not benefited anybody.

We have given a solemn oath that we shall never attack Western Europe. The West should trust us, proceeding from a sober analysis of our interests, our policy and the principles it is based on. It does not have to like us to trust us. We too should trust Western Europe, proceeding from an analysis of all its interests. The only conclusion to be drawn is that nobody will undertake a march on the East in the foreseeable future.

Everybody seems to understand this. But not everybody draws the correct conclusion. Richard Burt, the U.S. Ambassador to the F.R.G., says that a nuclear-free Europe would be the greatest strategic folly on the part of the West. Perhaps this view would in a sense have been correct if the nuclear weapon could be regarded as an instrument of war. But this approach is obviously outdated. Today the nuclear weapon has ceased to be an instrument of war. It is an instrument of politics, because it is entirely controlled by politicians. The degree of control is so absolute that the nuclear weapon is spilling over into politics, so to say.

But what sort of politics? In Europe, something else is winning increasingly wide recognition, and that is the fact that the nuclear weapon is outliving itself. As a factor of security it is characteristic of a definite stage in historical development. This stage is not yet over. But Europe is already seeing its obvious results. The accumulation of vast stockpiles of nuclear weapons is artificially exacerbating the general contradictions and increasing tensions to the extreme. It is not only in the socialist states, but also in the West European countries that people are saying that to pave the way for nuclear disarmament it is above all necessary to criticize and abandon the theory that has proclaimed the nuclear weapon a deterrent and an indispensable factor in interstate relations. Though it cannot be used as an instrument of war, the very existence of the nuclear weapon is damaging to the normal functioning of the European community, sharpens tensions and excites hostility. It is a constant factor in the cold war.

The presence of nuclear stockpiles in Europe has a corrosive effect on human mentality. These arsenals obstruct the implementation of new political concepts and the establishment of a new system of values. Nuclear weapons are having a distorting effect on the civic mentality of Europeans. They exert immense pressure on social consciousness, giving rise to apathy and indifference and causing loss of perspective. It would be no exaggeration to say that the nuclear weapon constitutes a threat to European values. How could any one possibly say that a nuclear-free Europe would be the greatest strategic folly? Do we need another Erasmus of Rotterdam to write scathingly in praise of this folly?

However, it is also clear that, though vigorous efforts are being made to find a new approach, we will have to live with classic power politics for some time. Meanwhile, sober-minded militarists will try to prove – and not just with words – the permanent value of supermodern, ever more sophisticated military force as the main instrument of and condition for security. The balance of the military forces of the opposing military-political alliances in Europe and the role it plays therefore remain a reality...but only for the time being. The less confidence there is between the sides, the greater is the role of military-strategic parity, and vice versa. They are in inverse proportion. The greater the mutual confidence, the less is the role of the military-strategic balance, no matter how accurately it may be calculated. The policy of gradual replacement of parity and deterrence with a system of universal security will guarantee greater leeway.

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The content of European security is gradually changing. The need to limit the military factors of security and hence to lower the level of confrontation between the military blocs is becoming increasingly obvious as the decade approaches its end. This offers better prospects for the Helsinki process. Its basis – the peaceful coexistence of the two social systems – will of course remain unchanged. Let's face it: the differences and competition between the two social systems are certain to spill over to the 1990s. The important point is the forms this competition takes. In the European socialist countries, perestroika and reforms will result in what is known as "more socialism." In the capitalist states, development will probably produce "more capitalism." Will the outcome be greater socio-economic rapprochement in separate spheres on the basis of what is termed "post-industrial society?" The late 1980s have answered this question in the negative. This subject is really the realm of philosophers and sociologists. As far as politics is concerned, it is vital to guarantee that the competition between the two social systems is exclusively peaceful.

Politics always calls for a sober and calculated approach. But this alone will not suffice. History has shown that creative politics also requires imagination, a romantic spirit and mental agility. Without them politics is dead. The political philosophy of new thinking opens up possibilities for the further, more dynamic, development of relations between East and West in Europe. There is more to the Washington treaty than a mere reduction of the danger of war. It can and must initiate the demilitarization of the European consciousness, it must help overcome mutual distrust and suspicion. That is why the Soviet Union's plan for the elimination of nuclear weapons by the year 2000 is practicable.

It appears to me that today mankind stands a better chance of preventing a nuclear or ecological disaster than preceding generations did of averting the first and second world wars. Unless something unpredictable happens and we perish in an unaccountable catastrophe, I would like the future to offer more hope to Europe.

There have been many policies in history – the policy of strength, the policy of balanced strength, equilibrium, threats, playing on contradictions, axes, triangles and pentagons. Now the time is ripe for intellectual politics in Europe's interstate relations. This should be a new era of such politics.

This is also a European reality.

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ENOUGH OF WARS!

ALES ADAMOVICH

Much of what has been said, thought about and done in recent years in this far from simple, changing, ever more dangerous and ever more indivisible world of ours, is capsuled in the single thought: enough of wars!

Enough! Mankind has had enough of wars! Man has begun to realize that he has had a surfeit of war, that there must be no more war.

This thought was expressed by Mikhail Gorbachev, one of the signatories of the first agreement in history on the voluntary elimination of part of the deadliest of all weapons.

The reaction to this of a great many people was one of mixed feelings of relief and amazed approbation, joy and jubilation, but in others, perhaps, of doubt and disagreement, even protest.

What, the objectors cry, discard all that technology and know-how? Silence the raucous brasshats? Scrap all those splendid doctrines and scenarios of if not global then at least limited warfare, if not nuclear then conventional wars, even the smallest? What about all those engaged in this now prestigious sphere who would suddenly lose something of their worth (not to speak of the more mercantile considerations - of the military-industrial complex, for instance)? And what of the desire to yield to the ingrained, still tenacious temptation to take possession, before it is too late, of some morsel of territory, wealth, power, prestige and all the other things for the sake of which wars have been fought for thousands of years?

Call a sudden halt to all that?

Yet it is precisely in this direction that things have been developing, gaining momentum day after day, year after year.

There is but one conclusion to draw from this:

"If the arms buildup, which we are working so hard, and with some success, to stop, constitutes a mad race by humanity to the abyss, regional conflicts are bleeding wounds which can result in gangrenous growths on the body of mankind."(From Mikhail Gorbachev's Statement on Afghanistan.)

Hence, beyond the political settlement in Afghanistan there looms the question: what armed conflict is to be extinguished next? Where to cut the fuse that could detonate the nuclear stockpiles?

Only yesterday there were practical politicians and theorists who, while pressing for a ban on nuclear wars, held that conventional wars still had to be thought about. Recall, they said, that incontrovertible thesis about just and unjust wars. (Although, of course, no one in the past could have foreseen the apocalyptical situation brought about by the advent of the nuclear weapon.)

But even for the military theorists who stubbornly cling to their old postulates the following words must surely be convincing:

"Wars with the use of conventional weaponry lend themselves less and less to limitation either as regards the gravity of the consequences or the loss of life involved. It is slowly but surely becoming ever clearer that such a war would also be difficult to win." (Dmitry Yazov, U.S.S.R. Minister of Defence.)

Enough of wars! Hear that, brother-writers, has it found an echo in your hearts? The time, the new thinking, the new feeling do not deny us the right to write about war, wars, about the instruments of slaughter. The only question is - how to write? Or how not to write?

Let us not indulge in poetic flights of fancy, let us not be carried away by passions where the normal human reaction is a shudder of horror.

"Is it possible to have an affection for a missile?" reads a subhead in a feature arcile by Alexander Prokharov. "Yes, it is!" the author exclaims.

Even if shooting still goes on, the truth is that humanity is sick and tired of wars, it has been denied the right to seek military solutions of problems. Denied by history itself, by the realities of the nuclear age.

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How wonderful it was to be conscious of this in a country where you, your homeland had been for a long time regarded as the "potentional enemy" which at any moment could launch a missile attack. This is exactly what Americans were told about us - by politicians, the press, the cinema and TV films. Especially after fightings began in Afghanistan. And the fighting is still going on. At the time of our American visit, Mikhail Gorbachev's Statement on Afghanistan had not been made, the endless war between Iran and Iraq had not abated, military pressure on Nicaragua continued, and the situation in the Middle East had worsened - nothing seemed to be changing. Nevertheless something in the world has changed, and radically. The change can be tracted directly to the signing of the epochal treaty on the elimination of two types of missiles. But of course that was preceded by many things: our 18-month moratorium on nuclear testing, patient pursuance of the policy of new thinking in foreign relations, our perestroika at home - in a word, many things.

THE TRUTH IS THAT HUMANITY IS SICK AND TIRED OF WARS. IT HAS BEEN DENIED THE RIGHT TO SEEK MILITARY SOLUTIONS OF PROBLEMS

In the United States there is an organization called Beyond War. Its leaders and members are co-authors with Soviet writers and scholars of what is in a way a unique book - "Breakthrough: Emerging New Thinking." It is said of this book that practically every article in it could have been written by an American or Soviet author. In it there is almost none of the usual phraseology that had separated us for so long. Clearly in speaking of common problems, the most important problems, it is best to discard completely that smug assertion of being right in all and everything from the start. After all, it is the hard fact that not a single philosophy, not a single system of views was ready to comprehend the problems of the nuclear age in all their perilous complexity. (Recall if only our attitude for decades to the Russell-Einstein manifesto.)

The ten Soviet contributors to "Breakthrough," together with

their American co-authors and members of the Beyond War organization which is rapidly winning support all over the United States, visited dozens of cities, and towns, and spoke on countless occasions at public gatherings of all kinds.

The keynote of our American tour was this: enough of wars! It is time to begin living in a world that does not recognize the right to wage wars!

The main thing we realized (at any rate, I did) as we were swept across America as if on the crest of a wave - with ever new people at the wheels of the cars that drove us from place to place, different houses, families and hotels nearly every day, dozens of new freiendly faces, new audiences in private homes, in churches, in universities - the main thing we realized, I say, was that if we want complete mutual understanding and accord with Americans like these, and they make up the majority of the people in this country, all the obstacles and impediments to such understanding must be removed, **all and at once.** In our hearts and in our minds. It is the diplomats and politicians who can resolve problems or even a single problem piecemeal, counter by counter, here and removing another there. With ordinary Americans it is different: either they believe you and trust you completely or just as completely they disbelieve and mistrust you.

The strength of the organization, so American in both spirit and substance, in whose name we were passed along from host to host only yesterday total strangers to us (both with whom a day later we parted like brothers), I repeat, the strength of Beyond War, the secret of its influence lies precisely in its dedication to the idea of a world without wars, without any kind of wars, big or small, good or bad. Perhaps many of these Americans only recently believed just as implicitly, in technololgy, believed that if it were the best, the acme of perfection, it could save them, and hence they could for some time be bamboozled by all kinds of wild computations and scenarios of "limited" nuclear wars - all that is possible. But today these people have opened their eyes, and realizing in nuclear war no one can win but all can perish, they stand solidly for a world without wars, without hostility, without risky politicking, without political lies! In brotherhood! "We live on our planet, with one life-support system.The survival of all humanity, all life, is totally interdependent."

For those who wear the circular green badge symbolizing the planet or simply a tab with their own names on it - the people we met in private homes where most of our meetings with members and sympathizers of the organizations took place - these simple words of the brief programme in fact a pin that goes with the badge of the organization, are at once a vow and a clearly defined reality.

"I believe that the development of nuclear weapons has forever changed our world," he says."**War is now obsolete.**

"I have decided to work together with others to build a world beyond war.

"This pin symbolizes the earth we all share, surrounded by a spirit of good will. When you wear this pin, remember, pray or meditate on this thought until it becomes a reality.

"I believe conflict can be resolved only with a sincere search for truth and a spirit of good will. Therefore, I will not preoccupy myself with an enemy. Instead, I accept the responsibility to work for creative solutions that will benefit everyone."

"You know," said the lawyer who drove us from Santa Cruz to Monterey, "it was not so much the ideas that attracted me to this organization as the people. They are all such nice people."

Yes, the people are incredibly nice. I was even promoted to

From right to left: George Bulow, Ales Adamovich, Craig Barnes, John Romini.

recall and cite in one of my talks with silly episode from the famous "Kon-Tiki" in which one of the crew caught a fish or some other creature of unusual beauty, and said: "No, it's too beautiful to be real," and threw it back into the ocean.

"Perhaps it is the ideas that attract such people," I observed to the man at the wheel. "It means that the ideas themselves are of the highest order."

On several occasions (the sober-minded realistic sceptic that I am), I could not help remarking:

"Aren't there any bad Americans? Where have you hidden them?"

"Oh, there are plenty!"

"But they walk on the other side of the street? Is that right?

Or perhaps they are all outside California? As in the case of the proverbial Byelorussian who was asked: "Are there any people outside of Gomel?" To which he replied: "There are, but they don't amount to anything."

We all of us (I in northern and southern California, Boris Raushenbach and Stanislav Roshchin somewhere nearby, some 500 to a thousand kilometres away - distances in the U.S. are much like our own - and Anatoly Gromyko, Natalya Bekhtereva, Alexander Nikitin, Elena Loshchenkova, Andrei Melvil, Vladimir Ageyev and Tatyana Kabachenko in Texas, in Washington area, in New York district, in the north, the west and the east - we were all taken about in relays by the most peaceful people in this country, and if we had needed confirmation that such people are to be found all over America we certainly found it.

These Americans not only profess and propound the belief that there must be a world without wars. They pay for this belief, and Americans don't give away money for nothing.

The most memorable were the gatherings of some 20-30 persons in spacious though one-storey private houses (California is a land of single-storey houses) where we were brought usually before breakfast or lunch (each housewife bringing some home-made dish) when each person rose to give his or her name, profession, occupation, place of work, and how long he or she had been working with the organization. Here too the classical American motto of "time is money" is presented from an entirely unexpected angle.

Yes, they value both time and money. How highly, then, must the ideas and objectives of the Beyond War organization be

evaluated by a real estate dealer who spends a whole day on the organization's affairs neglecting the business on which his income depends.

Or take the case of the husband and wife, both prosperous lawyers: first the wife gave up her clients to devote herself wholly to the work of the organization, and then the husband followed suit - "We have some savings, quite enough to go on with."

How strong must be his belief in the urgency of the cause of peace for an American to give priority over his own affairs to preaching the idea of a world without wars, in an effort to influence the voters of his constituency so that they in their turn might influence their congressman. (Later we were to meet two congressmen from California in Washington, the place where crucial political issues are decided, this time the issue being the ratification of the treaty signed by the leaders of our two countries).

WHERE ARE THE BAD AMERICANS!

We met all these people, made their acquaintance (always only the first few minutes were awkward before we got into conversation with them and before the faces of our hosts lit up with smiles), asked each other questions, gave talks (any monologue at a dinner table was qualified thus), and then off we were whisked again to meet new people, new Americans.

There were always several people accompanying us. The three with me were Craig Barnes, a lawyer, John Romini, a physician, and George Bulow (who introduced himself as Georgi Andreyevich, "the bones of my forebears are scattered all over Russia, that's something you can't forget!" was an oft-repeated phrase of his) acting as interpreter.

Picture the four of us in Fresno (a small town on our route to Los Angeles), or in Visalia, or perhaps in Irvine (everything is constantly changing, only we four remain). We are seated on a stage or simply at a table facing an audience. John begins the talk, then Craig takes over, and then it's my turn. Sometimes John uses a sort of "visual aid" - a metal plate and two plastic jars, one big and one small, containing metal pellets.

It is both simple and effective and never fails.

He picks up a pellet and drops it onto the metal plate. That is the amount of explosive energy used in all the years of World War II to kill and destroy. And this much, he says, pouring the contents of the smaller jar into the plate, is contained in the warheads and missiles which we intend to destroy under the Washington treaty. But there still is this! He picks up the large jar whose contents represent the equivalent of thousands of World War II. The amplifier held by one of John's assistants, Craig or myself, swells the sound of the pellets crashing onto the metal plate. The audience watches and listens spellbound.

And all these means of destroying everything living on our planet several times over have been created on the pretext of increasing your security, John says. And now it transpires that the reverse is the case. The more weapons and the more sophisticated they are the less security there is.

And California after all is where the most up-to-date of modern weapons are designed and produced. Moreover, millions of people are engaged in their production.

Indicative of the new view of things - unorthodox by yesterday's standards - of what is advantageous and what is not is the fact that the city council of Fresno, for example, has resolved to declare Fresno a nuclear-free city (which means forfeiting war orders and well-paid jobs) if a Soviet city does likewise.

An unprecedented America, incredible Americans! But perhaps we simply do not know them well enough.

John, who has visibly paled (this young doctor, the father of two lovely children with whom, incidentally, we were to take a trip to the fabulous Disneyland, takes this object lesson with the pellets very much to heart), in a voice trembling with emotion, gives the floor to Craig. The latter picks up the thread of the talk and continues it at a speed difficult to keep pace with.

Georgi Andreyevich, a physicist and my bearded interpreter, is able to give me only the gist of Craig's irrepressible flow of words ("I can't imagine how the Soviet interpreters will manage to work with him," he says to me in a loud whisper). He is referring to the return visit the American authors of "Breakthrough" are due to make in March this year, a breakthrough to the boundless expanses of our country. I myself am less concerned about the interpreters' difficulties than about whether we will be able to bring our people's boundless dedication to peace and desire for reconciliation home to them as effectively as they have conveyed theirs to us).

Meanwhile Craig goes on, as had been planned, to tell the audience how "Breakthrough" came to be written. How the American and Soviet scholars had had to clarify the meaning of many concepts and words: during the decades of confrontation and certainty on the part of each side that it alone was in the right even scholars ceased to understand one another.

TRUST CANNOT TOLERATE FALSEHOOD

Further, Craig (whose features have an ascetic, somewhat Scandinavian cast but whose gestures are those of an Italian) goes on to say that many, very many changes for the better in the life of society and humanity as a whole began with the written word: and again the names of Pushkin, Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky are mentioned. This was the only repetition we forgive him. The point is that at the very beginning of our tour we had agreed, half in jest, half seriously) not to repeat ourselves even in different towns and before different audiences. In the first place we have to listen to each other and repetition would become unendurable, we would lose our self-respect. Secondly, we would cease respecting the audience, a touch of triteness and cynicism might appear. In our cause we could not allow that to happen.

Each of us has his strong points: John captivates audiences by the frankness of his emotions, Craig by the power of his lawyer's logic and wit. As for myself, I somehow sense that the narrative style will have a special apeal for American audiences. Real life stories, parables, especially about mothers, children, and always with an unexpected ending. In a word, O'Henry! But of course that is not the main thing expected from the "Russian." They look for openness, frankness, readiness to speak freely about everything - after all, you come from the land of **glasnost** and **perestroika.** And they are interested not in what you have to say about glasnost and perestroika, but in these things being manifest in your words, thoughts and behaviour. No amount of words about perestroika and glasnost will convince anyone if you start getting evasive and shy away from slippery subjects.

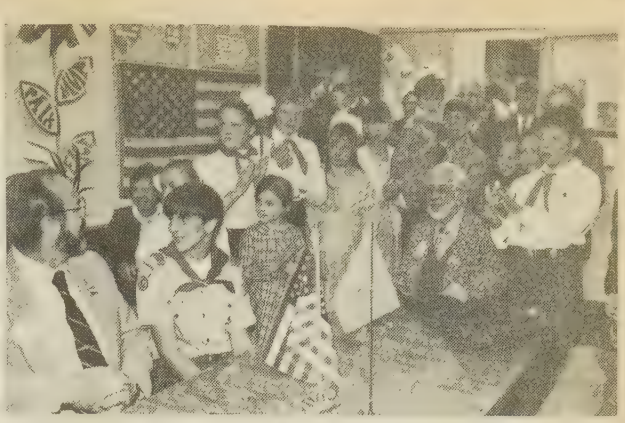
After all, they treat you with open-heartedness and trust, and have no intention of taking advantage of your frankness to do injury to you and your country.

George (excuse me, Georgi Andreyevich!) gave me his own view, the view of a Russian American, of the American character: they are as trusting and frank as children, he said. But they also take offence as easily as children. If their trust is abused.

It's the Wild West in their blood - immediately after kissing and embracing you they are ready to reach out for their six-shooter. That is if their trust has been betrayed and their open-heartedness abused.

Of course there is a great deal of pretense in their smiles. Everything is okay! Even when things are anything but okay. But this is not falsehood. They cannot endure falsehood, lies. That at any rate is the opinion of Russians who have lived for many years in America. And their view, from the sidelines, as it were, is worth a great deal in terms of objectivity and freedom from prejudice.

(To be continued)



Citizens' diplomacy in action: American war veterans visiting schoolchildren in the Soviet city of Murmansk in the European Far North.

TASS photo

DIALOGUE: FROM AN IDEA TO REALITY

The Dartmouth Conference working groups on regional conflicts and political relations have concluded their sessions in Moscow. The chief purpose of the Dartmouth meetings is to discuss various aspects of Soviet-American relations and obtain a still deeper insight into the processes under way in both countries.

We follow with an interview granted by Columbia University Professor Seweryn Bialer, co-chairman of the committee on political relations.

Asked about his view of the Dartmouth process as applied to the present state of Soviet-American relations and the practical value of such meetings, Professor Bialer said that he had been participating in the Dartmouth Conference and other such forums for quite a long time now; these meetings were of special importance during the period when Soviet-American contacts - official ones included - had been reduced to a minimum. Now these meetings are taking on a new quality.

As distinct from official representatives, he continued, we can learn much more about each other's positions and, moreover, we have an excellent chance to try out new ideas which could be fruitfully acted upon at government level. These meetings are a fine touchstone for new initiatives which can be put into practice in the long term. The meetings are unofficial, of course, but they usually draw persons active on the Soviet and American political scenes.

Professor Bialer expressed the view that Soviet-American relations had undergone impressive changes for the better on both sides. Although many problems have still to be resolved, the coming months and years are bound to bring even greater progress. I am profoundly convinced, he said, that an agreement on the problem of strategic armaments would be reached as well. That was a question of time, not of politics. Professor Bialer described this as a sphere of lasting American-Soviet cooperation, because our interests coincide here. Both sides arrived at the conclusion that neither can gain strategic superiority. Hence the logical conclusion that it is a crime to go on spending money on nuclear arms, which cannot bring more security either to the U.S.S.R., the U.S.A., or any third countries.

On the other hand, it would be unwise to close our eyes to the fact that differences between our two countries are an objective reality. Arms control and nuclear weapons are just two of the complicated issues that divide us in various spheres. Our social systems, ideology and interests are poles apart. In Professor Bialer's view, these differences would persist, but they should take the form of peaceful competition and never develop into confrontation. He saw this as a cardinal difference in approach from that which prevailed in the past.

"You have mentioned the positive changes in Soviet-American relations and in approaches on both sides. Can this process be regarded as irreversible? What does it take for 'new political thinking' to become part and parcel of practical international politics?" our correspondent asked.

Much depends, he replied, on what meaning is attached to this term. The process of putting "new thinking" into practice in modern international politics has to go through three main stages.

First, we must revise the preconceived notions of one another which underlay our relations in the past.

Second, we'll have to consider new concepts, one of them being, for instance, the idea of an all-embracing international security system put forward by General Secretary Gorbachev. I regard this concept as being connected with the revision of old notions of the nature of interrelations between the socialist and capitalist countries.

Finally, new concepts must be translated into reality. This involves the danger of a certain imbalance between approaches based on new concepts, on the one hand, and concrete changes in practical policy, on the other.

These new approaches already apply to certain aspects of our relationships - arms control, in particular. Professor Bialer said he was optimistic about the future: hopefully, we are witnessing the beginning of the end in the strategic arms race.

In other spheres, however, new concepts haven't as yet been embodied in new policy. For instance, the progress made on the issue of regional conflicts, and new approaches to it, have not yet had any effect on practical politics.

MIKHAIL SVETLICHNY

A requisite of people's rule

Reflections after the February plenary meeting of the CC CPSU

VITALY GANYUSHKIN

A short while ago, at the editorial offices of the newspaper Sovetskaya Kultura, a group of experts met to discuss the pedagogical legacy of Anton Makarenko and determine his true place in today's restructuring of our society. And there a new slant was given, one that brings me right up to the subject of these notes. One of the participants suggested that a new subject be introduced in schools - the shaping of democratic culture, in other words, the culture of people's power.

Democracy and culture, you will notice, are linked, just as they were by Mikhail Gorbachev in his speech at the February plenum of the CC CPSU. Therein lies the essence of our present view on and approach to the system of enlightenment and education, the spiritual culture of society as a whole. I emphasize, the present approach which stems from the second stage of perestroika, when the need for ideological renovation has become so evident.

Why is culture, as the backbone of ideological renovation, coming in for so much attention?

The reason, I think, should be sought in the fact that the present spiritual state of society, as the overall result of its cultural advancement, cannot fully ensure a transition to a qualitatively new state. If this transition is to be fully ensured, the spiritual sphere has to be decisively restructured (perhaps that should even come first). As was stated at the plenum, the Party has set its course towards a competent and farsighted policy with regard to the spiritual sphere of society, aimed at cleansing and enriching it, increasing its moral strength and creative potential.

In Soviet society culture was originally called upon to help effectively shape people's outlook, their spiritual world and, in the final count, prepare them to take up active social positions in life. This social activity of Soviet people can be seen as an overall criterion of the effectiveness of the educational process, whose purpose was so well defined by Maxim Gorky: to educate is to revolutionize. As man's highest moral criterion, culture is called upon not only to affirm noble ideals, but also to prompt a critical assessment of realities with an eye to their revolutionary transformation. A cultured society, like a cultured person with a developed social consciousness, does not avoid difficult unsolved problems, nor does he try to hide the sometimes acute contradictions that develop; rather he seeks to perceive, understand and resolve them.

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Gradually, and especially in the recent past, a period we now describe with bitterness as the years of stagnation, the alienation of man from spiritual values began. Outwardly all seemed normal. Yes, we had a mighty education system, we had a very high percentage of intellectuals, creative intellectuals among them, yes, we had an all-embracing network of cultural and educational institutions and the material and technical basis of culture. There were indisputable achievements in the field of culture and the arts, some of which won recognition on the world scene.

But if we stopped to take a closer, more critical look, we found that culture functioned like a sphere of the national economy, with the same planned targets, reports and statistics, and that less and less attention was devoted to people and their spiritual life. The alienation of man from the spiritual values of culture was evident from the fact that its vast potential, its spiritual and moral principles under socialism, had either failed to penetrate or penetrated inadequately into the soul and intellect of each person, and did not affect all social strata of society. There were a number of people who regarded culture as a "closed system" and who did not find in themselves the spritual strength to adhere to this culture, make full use of their constitutional rights of access to the wealth of culture, and we did not help them do this.

A far from creative, stereotyped view of the role of culture in society was formed: you have the richest cultural potential, a temple of knowledge and beauty, and those for whom it is intended - the worshippers at this temple, the masses, the people. And the only concern was how the temple was frequented: the more people who visited it and the number of times they came, the greater the progress and achievements in attaining our ideal - an all-round developed individual. And, as time passed, less and less thought was given to the real effect that cultural potential was having on the people's minds and souls. And with the passing of time too we began to reap the fruits of this forgetfulness.

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Side by side with the truly inspired feats of a liberated people, with the numerous real achievements of the human spirit, mind and imagination, there began to appear marginal works, which the tenets of socialism had never forseen. And since they were marginal in numbers too, they began to be regarded as the inevitable by-product of what was on the whole a truly creative process. Up to a point...

Then the awakening came, when the immovable laws of the social system we ourselves had chosen made us recognize the vicious circle we ourselves had produced. And it was then that the shortcomings of the educational process became apparent, along with other social miscalculations. We saw that some individuals, but far from just a few, were not behaving in society as they should; they were not behaving in a Soviet way.

It was these caricatures of the harmoniously developed individual that displayed a particular lack of culture, a spiritual poverty, for the culture of an individual, his moral principles which, in our conditions, dictate his behaviour, demand that he act for the good of all, not in his own selfish interests. Not for nothing do discussions flare up in our press on morality and awards. The two do not go together automatically.

Yet the essence of democracy is the ability to participate consciously, and that means effectively, in running the affairs of your collective, and of course also the affairs of your country, but that can be done only by a man with culture, a developed person, conscious of his human dignity. That, I think, was what the plenum had in mind when it said: without culture, outside culture there can be no democracy, thereby naming culture as the decisive factor in the ideological substantiation of perestroika.

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Marx said that people are "both the authors and the actors of their own

drama." We are all subjects and objects in the society that we ourselves build. And probably it is culture - in the widest sense of its meaning - that enables us to play both these parts productively and with dignity. That is why the individual with all his collectivist features and with his own independent views, aspirations and assessments, is the main objective and greatest treasure of all socialist culture.

And when this social objective of culture escaped our attention for a time, it immediately affected the entire social and moral climate of society, with all the ensuing losses. We lost a great deal and are continuing to sustain losses because we were unable to unfetter completely people's initiative, creative instincts and independence, the plenum stressed. That today is not only a major task of perestroika, but also a supremely important one. Without exaggeration, today everything hinges on it.

The ideology of renewal set out by the Party urges us to work for the revolutionary restructuring of society in order to stimulate fully people's initiative and independence and surmount their passivity, their lack of public spirit, and their inability to think for themselves - all traits that are products of bureaucratic styles of leadership. Only then shall we be able to overcome the forces hindering progress in the spiritual sphere (forces that are stronger there than perhaps in any other sphere).

The plenum made the human factor and ways of activizing its potential the cornerstone of its work. In the course of perestroika and the emergence of new thinking we have for the first time felt the fruitfulness of a socialist pluralism of views. And behind each independent view there stands as a rule an action as well - an example of personal or collective initiative and effort, a new approach. It is this atmosphere of a free competition of ideas, an alternative method of drafting decisions, that the Party seeks to establish in society. As was stressed at the plenum, socialism is a society made up of people with initiative. And socialism itself was the greatest initiative in history. The Party sees the guarantee of the success of the revolutionary restructuring of society in the free and live creative efforts of the people in all its many forms, taken in conjunction with a high level of culture and political consciousness.

That is why today we are directing all our efforts at the spiritual, ideological spheres, at culture and especially at the education system which is called upon to shape the entire culture of an individual, and not merely equip it with a certain necessary amount of knowledge; to shape that culture of democracy, that people's power of which the participants in the round-table discussion spoke.

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If we delve deeper we realize that the command-administrative style of management that once prevailed in our society was itself the product of lack of culture and the prevailing system of teaching and education in the schools. And in view of the state of individual culture and the culture of society as a whole, this style met with no adequate rebuff, which otherwise would have most probably developed spontaneously into a mighty process of democratization and glasnost. What played a particularly unfortunate role was the, for socialism, the unnaturally low level of legal knowledge imposed in the past, especially in the years of the personality cult.

For instance, not so long ago the Labour Code, that fundamental legal act that everyone should have known if only to be able to defend his rights at work, was kept hidden in the safes of the senior administrators of a work collective, and a rank-and-file worker had no access to it. Today the Party at its plenum suggested a nationwide programme, embracing all sections of the population, everyone in the centre and in the provinces, to teach law. There can be no doubt that the implementation of such a programme will in the near future provide a reliable legal foundation for democratization.

And the schools. A sober look at them gave much food for thought. They seemed to have sought only good percentages that embraced everyone, their aim seemed to be not to develop pupils' individuality and make them active members of society, but to be able to report good results while producing quiet youngsters without minds of their own. Teachers seemed to have been hamstrung by instructions and orders from above. Those few teachers who in the years of stagnation and earlier fought, often at considerable risk to themselves, and succeeded in pushing through something new in the educational process, we describe today as enthusiasts, almost heroes. But shouldn't all teachers be like them?

How? To return to Makarenko. His pedagogical system is above all a system that produced individuals. Not lemmings, but individuals, different and therefore active in society, in their collective which, according to Makarenko, was the only medium where real citizens could mature. Yet what do we find? In the Federal Republic of Germany alone about 800 works had been published on the Makarenko system by 1980, while in our country those who want to study him have to use books published forty years ago, for there was a long period when the very name of Makarenko was taboo, and in the 1950s there was a stormy discussion as to whether we needed his works or not. So it is not surprising that a poll taken among teachers revealed that most of them knew about the great teacher's system not from his scientific works but just from his novel, "The Pedagogical Poem."

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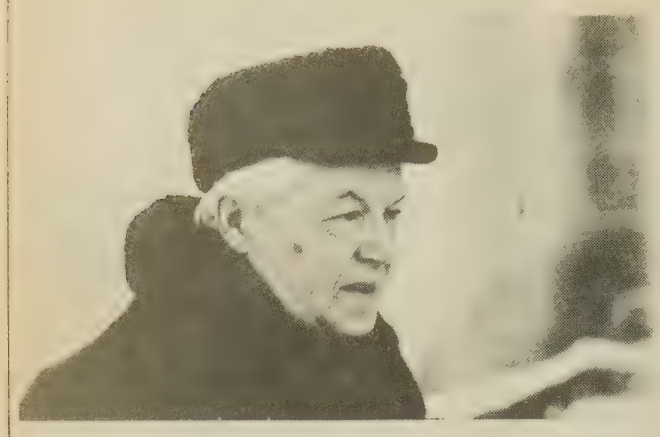
Now we have realized that without culture, the culture of the human individual, there can be no personal opinions, no conscious initiative, no socialist pluralism of views as the basis of democracy. We have realized this and begun to act. Even the short months of perestroika have produced a tangible change in the education system, in the humanization of society's life as a whole. Even the school reform begun earlier has undergone qualitative changes to meet the new requirements. The plenum mapped out even more decisive changes, calling for an innovative concept of both education and the cultural renewal of society.

One last thing. Lack of culture, like culture itself is unfortunately a worldwide phenomenon. And, to put it mildly, some competition wouldn't come amiss. Take, for instance, the "enemy image" that is ingrained in the minds of the average Westerner. That too is a product of lack of culture. The absence of true information about our country and its friends is more than made up for by myths and fantasies easily assimilated by average citizens.

That is why today, in the age of new thinking, the cultivation of relationships between nations is so vital, a civilized dialogue instead of mutual recriminations, cooperation in a spirit of mutually balanced interests, instead of attempts to impose one's will on other countries and peoples. That is the kind of international coexistence that our country is calling for by its own concrete actions and example. One could cite numerous examples of such a new approach arising out of perestroika and new thinking, right up to the signing of the INF treaty, to which the Soviet side contributed so much.

The sovereignty of even enlightened monarchs always rested on the ignorance of their people. Having overthrown the monarchy and all it stood for, our people immediately set about enlightening themselves. And they achieved great success. Today the power of the people in the form of the Soviets is being revived in its Leninist form. And Lenin directly linked its effectiveness with culture; "the sovereignty of the people," as he described Soviet power, is possible only if a cultured enlightened and civilized people practise it. We have sought to reach that goal, worked towards it, in the past and present, and we shall reach it. ■



A WATER COLUMN FIVE METRES TALL

SERGEI ZALYGIN

In mid-January, the Central Committee of the CPSU and the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. issued a resolution on the radical reorganization of nature conservation in our country. This was an event of signal importance which prompted many thoughts - not all of them optimistic.

That we must work for the future is taken for granted by most of us. Our whole society is oriented to the future. However, there may come a time, when it suddenly dawns on us that we are working against our own future.... Such moments - the most critical ever in world history - have arisen in the past eventful decades.

It is not my object here to discuss general theoretical problems, so I'll confine myself to my own experience as an opponent of some projects of a particular water-development scheme which was to have been carried out in this country.

I mean, specifically, the project, well known to the public at large, to divert river flows. I would like to express thoughts I have already voiced dozens of times - unfortunately, to almost no avail.

The problem is that the situation of our water economy is truly catastrophic. If it persists, the consequences may be unforeseeable.

Here is an example. Much is being said about the scale of the Chernobyl disaster. It had the effect of a bomb explosion; it attracted world attention and evoked universal anxiety. But a close look at one of our republics and at the predicament of its people - the Karakalpaks - shows that the swamping and salinization of the soils has done much greater damage to the environment.

Forty or fifty years ago the republic's soil was quite normal by Central Asian standards, with numerous oases. Today the soil is actually vanishing - if hasn't vanished already. The problem is that while the Aral Sea is drying up and while local water managers demand that the government should supply water from Siberia, the rate of irrigation amounts to 55,000 cubic metres per hectare in Karakalpakia compared to the maximum permissible rate of 15,000 cubic metres. Just imagine a column of water some five metres tall bearing down on each square metre of the soil, washing it away and destroying it year in and year out....

The desert is turning into a swamp. The lands bordering the Kara-Kum canal have become waterlogged for up to ten kilometres each side of the waterway. The desert, previously critically short of moisture, has been transformed. One hundred and fifty pumps drain water continuously from the environs of Ashkhabad to prevent the city in the desert being swamped by irrigation water.

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The country spends 10.5 billion rubles a year on water management (one of the largest items of the budget). To think that a good half of this sum is spent spoiling the land! This is no exaggeration. We are paying and paying dearly to kill the land.

Let me explain. The Ministry of Water Conservation (whose budget, already mentioned, runs into 10.5 billion rubles) employs a total of two million people - more than the entire Finnish work force.

Our land irrigation projects are sadly inefficient and misconceived. Monetary expenditure is regarded as the criteria of plan fulfilment. This system is expenditure-oriented. The objective boils down to spending the said 10.5 billion rubles in the space of one year, come what may. Is this rational management? No, this is mismanagement.

I myself regard the swamping of Karakalpakia, the death of the Kara-Bogaz-Gol and other such things as no less than state crimes.

Today we are building the Volga-Don canal 42 metres deep. In comparison, the Suez Canal is 14 metres, and Panama canal, 16 metres deep. Why does the country need this canal? No one has yet offered final (I stress final) proof of our need for it.

Even assuming that the discharge of water from the Volga to the Don is really necessary and that five cubic kilometres of Volga water must somehow be channelled to the Don - then this can be done by the existing system of canals. Consequently digging a new canal 42 metres deep is totally unnecessary, as proved by our seven veteran hydraulic engineers writing in the Novy Mir magazine No. 7, 1987.

However, water management bodies insist that river flow diversion remains top priority.

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Paradoxically, we reclaim less land than we lose owing to overgrowing, salinization, desolation, flooding - and irrigation swamping.

So why not divert funds from drainage and irrigation to other projects? Why not improve land by simple dry techniques - without the attendant risks? For any soil improvement scheme

**The beauty of the spring floodland...
What would happen to the soil if each square metre were to bear a water column 5 metres tall!**

Photo by V. Petrov

using water is a gamble. Whether it is carried out on one hectare or on a vast area, we never know what the effect will be: positive or negative. What we do know is that the land will not be the same....

We have found ourselves in a situation where the water management mechanism created by the state, with the best of intentions, is now devouring both the state and the environment we depend on for our very existence.

Plans are now afoot for the construction of the Turukhansk hydroelectric station. It is hard to tell what the consequences will be but one thing is clear - the Evenk people are facing serious ecological trouble. Who has proved the ecological soundness of this project? No one. There is no such proof.

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The main problem is that no alternative plans exist.

It is only where there are several options to choose from that there is room to manoeuvre in decision making. What are the consequences if there is just one project, if there are no arguments given in favour of hydromelioration or in favour of other methods of soil improvement?

I have studied American natural conservation laws. In the first place, they have experts in the legal aspects of ecology. Secondly, any American can sue the author of any project which he thinks environmentally unsound.

Even if the plaintiff cannot prove that a particular project is damaging, he may introduce alternatives which he believes to be better and/or more economical. This will suffice for the dubious project to be called off.

Although supporters of outdated projects, such as those mentioned above, reiterate that rivers are being diverted in the West for a variety of purposes and that we have fallen behind in this respect, I must say that this is not so. I know for a fact that no such projects have been undertaken in North America over the past decade.

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The resolution on the revision of ecological policy has given me the idea that ministries and departments should be given an incentive to make rational use of natural resources. For while they continue to benefit from the squandering of these resources nothing will change. Neither science nor public opinion will be able to change the situation.

In addition, fees must be charged for the use of natural resources. The state, the nation, the true owner of water, minerals and forests, must sell such resources to the ministries. The ministry will then have the discretion to draw upon these resources in carrying out industrial and construction projects. I regard this as a solution to the situation.

Indeed, we keep sounding the alarm, but has there been a single case of anyone being brought to account for squandering natural resources? Not to my knowledge.

The Magadan Regional Executive Committee recently sued the Ministry of Water Conservation for about four billion rubles. The latter had decided to improve northern lands by linking the local lakes with drainage ditches. As the Magadan Region lies in the permafrost region, all the ditches have turned into ravines, thus ruining the local landscape beyond repair.

The entire structure of relations between the state and the departments needs revision. Like most other people, I have a lot of questions to ask.

Such as: why does the Ministry of Finance allocate money for water management projects which have been cancelled by the government?

Why does the State Planning Committee hang on to outdated, purely administrative planning practices instead of abandoning them?

Perhaps the Ministry of Water Conservation should take up some other activity, such as road building, for instance, as it is obvious that its hydromelioration projects are worthless, to put it mildly.

To conclude, the serious nature of these problems requires urgent action. ■

Let's make life easier for women

EKATERINA KOZHUKHOVA

No royal road to harmony

What will women be like in the coming millennium? Will they be concerned with issues that have up to now been in the hands of men? Or, on the contrary, is the way forward the way back to herself, to her femininity, to an increasingly fuller and deeper harmony with her own nature and calling?

Discussions on the subject started in the 19th century and continue to rage. The "woman's question" continues to excite us. The opponents of feminine emancipation extol the traditional image of the guardian of family mores as the ideal, and are quick to indict the modern businesswoman as a creature with a charming smile and hand of iron. The other side, in turn, aims barbs just as stinging at the housebound doting mother, looking up to the paterfamilias in mute and meek admiration.

Sometimes the debate is so heated that the supporters of the various theories seem to have completely forgotten the woman herself, as if she were an inhabitant of another planet and did not ride in the underground with them, or work side by side with them in factories and schools, as if she did not cook dinners and bear children.

As I see it, day-to-day living and daily practice have far outstripped these theorists. The modern woman, the woman who works, thinks, acts and creates is an immutable reality, which cannot be avoided. How much she has achieved in the span of only a few decades! She has outstripped the "stronger sex" in educational levels, with women now accounting for 60 per cent of specialists with higher or secondary specialized education. She cooperates on an equal footing in the highest, most responsible offices: let me name in this connection among the many that could be listed women such as Alexandra Biryukova, a Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, Valentina Shevchenko, President of the Presidium of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet, Yevdokia Karpova, Vice-Premier of the Russian Federation, Zoya Novozhilova, Soviet ambassador to Switzerland, and Academician Tatyana Zaslavskaya. Indeed, note that in no capitalist country are women so well represented in parliament as in the Soviet Union: compared with the 99th U.S. Congress, of whose members only 4.5 per cent (and only two Senators) are women, in this country women comprise a third of all deputies to the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet. Finally, some half a million women direct major enterprises, building sites and farms.

However, do these striking facts, along with the other plentiful evidence that could be cited, indicate that the "woman's question" is no longer with us, that complete emancipation, meaning the woman's deliverance from conditions that restrict her potential has been reached, that from the **equal rights** enunciated at the dawn of Soviet power we have already attained full, comprehensive **equality** of women in this world?

Allow me to cite the latest statistics. I have before me the summarized timetable for women working at factories, offices and farms, computed by the U.S.S.R. State Committee on Statistics on the basis of a selective survey of 51,000 families who kept their own records. This document shows that today the woman averages a working day of 12 hours 48 minutes - inclusive not only of the eight-hour day at work, but also travel to and from work, household chores and shopping. This is no exaggeration. Sociologists, psychiatrists and doctors speak of what they term "transport fatigue." Nor is queueing at shops any too pleasant a way of spending time. Yet queues, incidentally, account for the lion's share of our allotted span; journalist Otto Lacis has calculated that in the space of the year some 35 million people spend as much time queueing as they would if working a full eight-hour day. Note that 38 million people work an eight-hour day in industry.

One should likewise emphasize that the woman has her obligations and duties as a mother, obligations and duties that so far no one has relieved her of, and she has no plans to deny herself the pleasure of fulfilling. But what does the working woman, "functioning" at this tempo have left for her children, as far as time goes? According to our summary, only 17 minutes of her 2 hours and 24 minutes of spare time! True, at weekends this goes up to about half an hour. But that is still not all. The mother of small children spends from six to seven hours daily doing household chores. So if she has no parents or in-laws to lend a helping hand, her weekly load adds up to a total of 77 hours.

Due to these tremendous stresses, the woman suffers and, as doctors claim, her general health leaves much to be desired. Yet one should realize that a healthy woman means a healthy coming generation.

The children also suffer.

The state is doing all it can to help the mother. Maternity leave has been extended, a law has been enacted allowing mothers of small children to work a short week, and they are entitled to a wide range of benefits and allowances.

Nonetheless, the state cannot take the mother's place. For, as everyone knows, all the basic personal qualities are built up in infancy. What the infant needs most is its mother's love.

These are all axiomatic truths, but I mention them once again for the benefit of the "stronger sex." I think the man can shoulder a fair amount, if not the lion's share, of household chores to enable the woman to allot more of her precious time to both family and society.

Let us not forget that!

HUMANIZING THE WORLD

Soviet Minister of Culture VASILY ZAKHAROV discusses the Soviet Programme for the World Decade of Development of Culture

N.T. Which ideas and approaches would you say distinguish the Soviet national programme for the Decade of Development of Culture?

V. Zakharov. The basic trend can be defined as the enhancement of the role of culture in society. This is related to perestroika: it accords with the spirit and ideas of perestroika. It also seems to me that the directions of cultural development in our country dovetail with worldwide trends, as we want our own movement to be in harmony with the worldwide movement.

We are extremely sympathetic to UNESCO's idea of bringing humanist values back to their pivotal role in man's technological and economic advance. In this connection allow me to refer to the recent plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, where so much was said about the significance of culture in social development, humanizing education, and our having put excessive emphasis on technocracy at the expense of the humanist side of life. I think this trend is likewise characteristic of the other industrially developed countries.

The effort to humanize education should also entail great changes in the realms of science and technology, and generally in all of our development, inasmuch as the harmoniously educated human being has a deeper vision and understanding of the character and objective of social and technological progress.

N.T. The UNESCO draft programme for the Decade puts four basic tasks before all taking part. These are, to humanize politics, enhance the political role of cultural factors, preserve and enrich the spontaneous nature of culture, and pursue a policy of promoting culture and expanding international cultural cooperation. Which aspect would our Soviet progamme emphasize?

V.Z. While by no means minimizing the significance of all the directions indicated, I would like to single out one specific thesis of the UNESCO recommendations which will promote international cooperation within the field we are talking about. That aspect will bring us closer to a deeper comprehension of international processes, a reciprocal understanding of the present-day world, a relaxation of tensions, and obliteration of the "enemy image" in

relations between peoples; it will help create a climate of confidence. Objectives of this order can be accomplished by means of, and through, culture.

Only recently I returned from celebrations in the United States of the 30th anniversary of our first agreement on cooperation in cultural, technical and educational fields. Though all sorts of things occurred over this period marked as it was by ups and downs and the rupture of our relations in these spheres from time to time, everyone starting with the U.S. Secretary of State stressed that the years of interruption were lost years. In this triad of culture, technology and education, both the Americans and ourselves focussed on problems of culture, for the simple reason that culture has its own rules and laws. After all, this is the only realm in which we can achieve a great deal on an absolutely disinterested basis! No cultural exchange is a one-way street: all partners stand to gain. This is borne out even by the vast mutual interest which, after six years of stagnation, one senses today in our cultural exchanges with the United States.

Addressing the latest congress of the Union of Artists of the U.S.S.R., the fine Latvian painter Dzemma Skulme made a very wise observation, which perhaps not everyone will welcome. "Culture," she said, "is a sphere today in which we are in a position to compete on an equal footing with any country in the world."

N.T. We speak of the years of stagnation, and yet at the same time note our high intellectual level.

V.Z. That is easy enough to explain. It is a consequence of the tremendous potential of the country's age-old multinational culture. Take the end of the 19th century and the start of the 20th. Can one find anything to compare with the wealth of gifted writers, artists, musicians and actors at the time? Yet all these names are simply a manifestation of our people's intellectual substance! Our potential is so rich that even the years of stagnation could not obstruct the rise of talent. I would like to emphasize that our country's classical cultural tradition has never been broken. I say this to take issue with all those who complain that the tradition was interrupted, before the revolution, after the revolution, or whenever....Culture is a monolith.

N.T. The entrenchment and enrichment of the spontaneous nature of culture are a basic objective of the Decade. How are we going to go about that in the Soviet Union?

V.Z. As a detailed account would take up too much time, allow me to cite just one example. Though we justly censure petrified and moribund forms of work in the field of cultural enlightenment, we must not overlook the fact that due to the enthusiasm of hundreds of thousands of specialists active in small village clubs, we have preserved, for the better or for the worse, our original folk arts and crafts. The fact that nowadays the "conservationist" approach alone is inadequate is quite another thing. It is the spontaneous culture of all nations and nationalities that should go forward and be enriched. This coming August, Moscow will be the venue for the First International Festival of Folklore, which is to become a regular event. The initial response to the project from abroad indicates that there will be enthusiastic backing. There is one further novelty: Vitebsk is to be the venue for a Polish song festival which, we hope, will become as traditional as the similar Soviet song festival in Zielona Gora. All that, though, is only the beginning. We have a whole decade and a very considerable job before us.

G.D.R.

Keep our common home clean

There is a Russian proverb that you shouldn't take rubbish out of the house. I should like to take its literal meaning further and suggest that nor should rubbish simply be thrown out. In our age of waste-free production surely that acquires a new meaning!

The planet is our common home, and it is up to all of us to keep it clean; all together and each of us individually. And not least of all for economic reasons because, as raw material resources diminish, it becomes increasingly important to put to use what we once regarded as waste.

Take the car, for example, the beloved child of technical progress. How it has changed life in the 20th century - allowing us to move quickly and manage to take in everything! But how many unexpected problems it has given rise to. On the border of the Sahara, where for miles around there is no trace of habitation, I saw piles of rusty, intact, crushed or damaged cars that had all outlived their usefulness. And mounds of no longer useful tyres. A depressing sight, to put it mildly.... And what about industry? How much waste does it throw out?

We discussed that in Berlin with Frank Hermann, a departmental chief at the G.D.R. Ministry for Environmental Protection and Water Resources. What interested me primarily was the, to us potentially useful, experience the republic had gained in utilizing waste. Frank Hermann, however, spoke too of the G.D.R.'s part and his own efforts within the framework of the CMEA standing committee on environmental protection. The G.D.R. acts as coordinator in the field of protection of the atmosphere from pollution by toxic substances, and its experts are involved in drafting 160 scientific programmes in keeping with a plan that takes us to the year 2000. The G.D.R.'s active partners in all this work from the Soviet side are the State Committee on Environment Protection and the State Committee for Science and Technology.

"We are now concentrating on two main fields," Hermann stressed, "saving natural resources and new waste-free technology."

For instance, about 80 million tons of industrial waste are piled up by industry in the republic each year. About ten years ago, 12 million tons were recycled. Quite an impressive figure. But in recent years we have brought it up to more than thirty million tons. Today about half the republic's requirements in raw materials are met by the recycling of industrial waste. Collecting it, as you know, is a troublesome and labour-consuming business. And most important of all, it has to be well organized. In the G.D.R., this problem is being successfully coped with. In towns and villages people collect and return to the state the waste that accumulates in their homes: paper, broken glass, scrap metal, thermoplastic materials, old electric batteries, and they are paid for immediately.

Drawing by N. Shcherbakov

As a result, the G.D.R. produces 70 per cent of its steel from scrap metal. 75 per cent of its bottles and jars are produced from broken glass, as well as 47 per cent of its new paper from used paper. Frank Hermann added that the republic's scientists were working on new technologies that would enable the paper industry to work almost entirely without using new resources.

Then we touched on the mountains of slag that surround metallurgical plants. So far only an insignificant proportion of them is used by the building industry, but in future slag will be a valuable raw material and will be used much more widely. We have discovered, he continued, that in the piles built up at the beginning of the century there is often more ore than in what is mined today. We have already started burrowing into these mounds and making use of them.

And what do you do with used tyres?

So far we have not learnt to extract the maximum economic advantage from them. So at present we are just stockpiling them, as we are some of the waste from aluminium production. But we believe that the time will come - and very soon - when they can be used to produce other products.

Combating air pollution and catching the different substances released in gas exhaust is a special object of study in the department headed by Frank Hermann. The main air pollutants in the G.D.R. are the power stations, despite the fact that all of them are equipped with special filters and other devices to catch waste. The problem of pollution however, remains fairly acute. The reason becomes clear when one recalls that 82 per cent of power stations burn brown coal. They emit large amounts of soot, dust and hydrogen sulphate. After a whole series of measures taken in recent years, more of the soot is being captured. Dust emission has been reduced by 30 per cent and a use has been found for the sulfuric dioxide.

We also spoke of a new form of economy - the secondary use of energy. In the past, Hermann said, water that became heated after use for cooling purposes at power stations was released into rivers. That did no service to the rivers and wasted a huge amount of heat. Now the water is usually used for heating homes or hothouses.

Summing up in conclusion, Frank Hermann said:

"People must be taught to take good care of fresh air, fresh water and the forests that surround them. Everyone must be made aware of his personal responsibility for protecting our environment. I should like to stress particularly that ecology and the utilization of waste have to go hand in hand. We thus kill two birds with one stone...if the birds will forgive me..."

LEONID REPIN

Berlin-Moscow

Mieczyslaw Rakowski:

CONVICTION AND POLITICAL COURAGE

What do you think about democratization and glasnost in Poland and the Soviet Union? What is meant by the phrase "socialism has entered a new phase"?

These and other questions were put by our correspondent in Poland Rudolf Borecki to Mieczyslaw Rakowski, the famous journalist and statesman, the author of several books, including the two-volume "Time of Hope and Disappointment" about the turbulent events in Poland between 1980 and 1983.

In 1985 Mieczyslaw Rakowski was elected Vice-Marshal of the Sejm (parliament), and in December 1987 the plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party elected him member of its Political Bureau.

Rudolf Borecki. For over 30 years you have been engaged in all three areas, so to speak, of politics: practical politics, political journalism, and theoretical analysis of the important events you have witnessed or, rather, have been involved in. How do you manage to combine these essentially separate forms of activity? Which of them is most important for you?

Mieczyslaw Rakowski. I think they well complement one another, and there is no contradiction here. On the contrary, a politician gets a more comprehensive picture of life, understands the essence of certain social processes better if he were engaged in all three fields. But this does not mean that every politician has a journalistic record.

R.B. But you are no really a typical.

M.R. Perhaps not. But, as you may know, many politicians begin their careers as journalists. I have thought it over before, as well, and come to the conclusion that there is nothing fortuitous about this. Journalism is a profession to be valued. Many people think wisely, sometimes more wisely than journalists, but far from all of them have the opportunity and even the professional duty to express their thoughts, addressing them to millions, as journalists do. This is a great privilege and, consequently, a great responsibility. The profession of journalism develops the habit of considering events from various angles.

To give a fuller answer to you questions, I would say that what is most important for me is practical politics based on theoretical analysis.

R.B. The weekly newspaper Polityka, founded with your active participation and edited by you for nearly 25 years, has withstood all trials, having maintained its political influence and kept its readership. How would you explain its viability?

M.R. It is not a simple question. I began to edit Polityka at the age of 30, long before subsequent difficulties and crises could have influenced the moulding of my character in a definite way. My generation was distinguished by its fervent revolutionary idealism. This idealism, our belief, was inseparable from our faith in the great value of truth, the ability to find a common language with the masses and the need to tell them only what you think.

I think that, as editor-in-chief of Polityka, I was able to endure all the storms and stresses mainly because I have always tried to be my own self and managed to recruit a body of contributors who also wanted to be their ownselves.

Reviewing the course of political events in Poland over the past few decades, I see that our opponents and critics, not infrequently in the party leadership, were finally compelled to admit that the editorial staff of Polityka has remained true to their views, to their stance. This aroused respect among the most far-sighted people.

Thus, the policy of holding our ground in difficult situations has in the end proved its worth. As a result, Polityka has gained a wider readership. It can be said that it has become a public institution, and not just a newspaper. Speaking plainly, the various features of our weekly helped it to strengthen its positions in the political life of Poland.

R.B. In 1981, perhaps the most difficult year for Poland in the postwar period, you gave up journalism and turned to practical politics, becoming vice-premier. What were the motives for this, I would say, courageous decision, which brought you into the main line of the acute political struggle? How did it happen?

M.R. Let me begin at the end. This government post was offered me by General Jaruzelski. In his opinion, I was the man who could find a common language both with the intellectuals and Solidarity, because, as editor of Polityka, I seemed to be associated with intellectuals. Our weekly usually carried critical articles by many eminent people in the arts, and there was every reason to believe that they trusted me.

One particular fact also played its part in the changing of my profession. In January 1981 I published an article entitled "Respect Your Partner," which evoked a widespread response and led to my appointment to the post of vice-premier. The party leaders decided that the man who preached the views stated in the article could find a common language with Solidarity. But it turned out that both they and I were mistaken.

R.B. I was in Poland at the time and closely followed the coverage of your discussions with Solidarity leaders and advisers by the media, especially on television. I must say I admired your restraint.

M.R. Both parties stuck to their guns. One trait of my character - persistence, I would even call it obstinacy - helped me in the argument. I belong to that category of people who if they believe something try might and main to persuade the other party to agree with their view. It may seem to some people that I try to impose my opinion on them. But persistence is simply one of my traits.

A Polish peace poster.

Therefore, when Solidarity leaders and advisers sat opposite me, I did not want and was unable to budge even an inch from my opinions. Experience has shown where the truth lies. As you remember, I consistently fought against the extremist tendencies in Solidarity. I think it is clear that if they had prevailed in 1981, we would not be talking here today.

But let us return to 1981. It was a trying period for the Polish left, for the Communists. A great deal depended on their boldness, on whether they would be able to win the support of broad public opinion. I say this mainly because, in my opinion, boldness at any level - high or low - is essential for any politician. The year 1981 showed us the importance of combining belief and conviction with the boldness necessary persistently to bring our ideas to the people.

R.B. Have you always been consistent during your almost 40 years of political activity? Have you had to make concessions or compromises?

M.R. Yes, I have made concessions and compromises, but only up to a point. I must say that I have not avoided tactical decisions, so to speak. But please don't think I am too self-confident - I have tried to remain true to my ideals, even in difficult and very tempting situations when an excuse could easily have been found for a departure from these ideals.

As a man grows older, he looks more attentively at himself, and not just in the mirror while shaving, and thinks more about life and his place in it. Of course, I have had to make concessions in various circumstances. But, I repeat, I have never departed from my basic ideals, though I have often been reproached with being idealistic and too emotional in reacting to events.

R.B. Politics and emotions are believed to be incompatible.

M.R. Not necessarily. Personally, I value politicians who are both emotional and sober-minded. But I want to return once more to 1981. For me it was a year of severe trials, if only because many of my friends went over to the other side. Not the enemy side however; they simply deserted us.

R.B. Do you mean "internal emigration"?

M.R. The process of "internal emigration" began after December 13, 1981, whereas there had been defections from our camp even in the preceding months. The circumstances were such that, theoretically, I might have found myself, too, with those who had abandoned us. Moreover, if I, as editor of such a popular newspaper as Polityka, wanted to gain the applause of the public, I could easily have achieved cheap success. It was enough to write "No to the authorities" on the banner of Polityka, and then all the opposition groups would have praised me to the skies. So don't be surprised if I repeat: the year 1981 was a real test for me and many others.

R.B. You have been elected several times to the party's Central Committee. Chinese leaders say that the level of the party's responsibility changes in different situations - normal and tense, and emergencies such as war. In some cases it is concentrated, and in others decentralized. What do you think about this?

M.R. I agree with some points. In my opinion, the sharing of responsibility for the exercise of power is the historic task of the ruling Communist parties. The leadership of our party understands precisely in this way how the concept of democratization should be put into effect.

R.B. Who should share the responsibility?

M.R. I have in mind non-party people, people's councils, self-management bodies at enterprises, and the allied parties of our government coalition, which consists of the Polish United Workers' Party, the United Peasants' Party and the Democratic Party.

The PUWP should strive for a genuine consensus and try to get support from its coalition partners. I am sure that for Polish socialism it is the correct way leading to the consolidation, not the weakening, of the Communist Party and the socialist system.

I recall an opinion expressed by Mikhail Gorbachev. The higher the educational level of the public, he said, the more it strives to take direct part in shaping economic and social policies.

R.B. It is genuine democracy, isn't it?

M.R. Yes, it is genuine democracy. For many years, however, the people have not taken a real part in running the country's affairs. We are only embarking on this path. By saying "we" I do not mean Poland alone.

R.B. In your books and articles you devote much attention to the international communist and working-class movement. Would you briefly comment on your statement that perestroika will give and is already giving a fresh impetus to this movement, especially in the West?

M.R. This question should be viewed historically. Thanks to two factors - the victory of the Soviet Union over fascism and the struggle of Communists against the invaders in many West European countries - the prestige of the Communist parties and the communist movement as a whole rose so much that Communists were included in postwar governments. It may be recalled that Togliatti was appointed vice-premier in Italy, the French Communists received ministerial posts, and so on. But then the situation changed because of U.S. interference, and the cold war began.

Later, the communist movement continued to lose influence and ceased to play the role determined by history after the second world war. It is no secret that we are partly to blame for such an outcome. Our society lost much of its appeal to the left in the West. They did not find it a sufficiently convincing argument for the effectiveness and future of socialism.

Thinking over the significance of the policy formulated by the 27th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, I conclude that thanks to this new policy, generally called perestroika, Western Communists have again received the necessary arguments to confirm the vital force of socialism needed to weather the troubles, and become the social system Lenin and other ardent Communists dreamed of in the early 20th century. These arguments will sound ever more convincing as perestroika is going along.

This explains, in my opinion, the direct connection between the developments in the Soviet Union and the international communist movement. Moscow is becoming a mecca for politicians from all countries. Interest in the Soviet Union is

growing steadily. During my visits to the West over the past two years I did not feel awkward, as before, in trying to explain our position. Today I have strong arguments and have no need to be defensive.

The position of the French and Italian Communists has changed too, because the Soviet Union's determination to get over its difficulties and stagnation provides an example to follow, and convincing proof of the strength and vitality of socialism.

R.B. You have recently visited the Soviet Union. What impressions did you bring back from Moscow? Is there anything in common between the processes of renewal taking place in our countries?

M.R. What we have in common is that our countries and parties understand the need to pull out of the straightjackets into which they have been squeezed by history or, more correctly, which we ourselves have put on our societies. Furthermore, the leadership of our parties - its brain trust, as a matter of fact - deeply believe that socialism cannot be considered the most rational system unless it provides conditions for the complete release of the energy and initiative of citizens and work collectives.

Such conditions can be provided only by way of restructuring our social and political relations along democratic lines. Both you and we understand that a great deal has to be changed and updated. It is simply necessary to recognize and bring into effect the considerations of common sense. This approach is already yielding positive results, though you cannot always lay your finger on it.

Now about my impressions of my visit to Moscow. I had a crowded programme and was truly amazed by the sincerity and openness of the numerous talks. Speaking briefly, it was especially important for me to learn that not only party leaders believe in the success of perestroika. The people I talked with realized that there are still many obstacles in the way of the economic and social reforms. However, they are convinced that the final result can be achieved if vigorous and purposeful action is taken. The chief impression of my visit to the Soviet Union is that the country is imbued with reasonable and well-founded optimism.

R.B. On returning to Poland you said that socialism is entering a new phase. What features of this phase could you mention?

M.R. It is, firstly, a departure from bureaucratically understood socialism. Secondly, it is an essential change in the attitude to man, the individual. Man is now at the centre of attention. I recall in this connection my visit to the art exhibition devoted to the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution. The central place at the show is held by man with his concerns and ideas. Not a machine or an optimistic industrial scene, but man. Not the "bright future," but the faces of people. For me it was a very convincing illustration of what I have just said.

This trend - interest in the individual - has been determined by your party. The strength of Soviet perestroika lies mainly in the fact that the impulses to it are being given by the party. True, one could ask whether the people are ready to accept innovative principles. But this is a subject for another discussion.

Thirdly, it is a departure from the

simplistic approach which for many years prevailed in the military sphere, and in disarmament. Today people the world over read with amazement of Soviet military installations to the inspected by American experts. A couple of years ago this would have been considered mere fantasy. It is a result of new thinking.

Among other, most essential, features I would also mention the recognition of imagination, bold creative thinking (and not only in politics) as a means of influencing the mode of life. Such an approach is especially important on the part of those who made the new phase possible.

R.B. We are now talking about the restoration of the Leninist principles of democracy, the need to promote it and learn democracy. One might get the impression, especially after listening to Western commentators, that until recently, before perestroika began, the socialist system was not democratic. How do you see this question in the light of Western comments and reality? What do you think about the democratization of public life in the Soviet Union and Poland?

M.R. I think it is useless to enter into polemics with Western propagandists, for otherwise I would have to give a whole lecture. Democracy really exists first of all in the countries where there is economic democracy, and the latter is not to be found in the capitalist world. Of course, capitalism has given birth to a certain system of democratic institutions, which partly create the impression that citizens influence the course of events.

R.B. But the main purpose of these institutions is to protect the capitalist order.

M.R. Yes, it is their supertask, so to speak. It is not citizens, the electorate, but the owners of the means of production who have the last say. Nevertheless, ordinary citizens can influence politics to some extent, and this fact should not be ignored. By taking part in elections they can help one or other party come to power. It is a different matter whom they elect. In the United States, for instance, the voters are offered a choice between tweedledum and tweedledee. And not in the United States alone. However, this influence is also important for a man's perception of himself in his everyday life.

But let us get back to our subject. I would not consider the call to learn democracy a mere slogan. Democracy means first of all a constant improvement of the principles by which the community is guided in its daily life, people reassessing their attitudes to society and their place in it. It also means respecting the views held by others, a considerate attitude to the position taken by someone else. Of course, I shall not accept that position if it is wrong. My views can and must be a subject of critical analysis. But one should not reject your opponent's reasoning a priori without trying to understand the essence of the matter. So, one must really learn democracy.

How is the democratization process going, why has it started at all? We must return here to history, to the victory of socialism in Eastern Europe. History alone can explain why democracy had its limitations and why we are now talking about the process of democratization.

The revolution of October 1917, the fierce civil war, the hostile capitalist encirclement, the war against nazi Germany, the tremendous efforts, sacrifices and losses, material as well as spiritual. The Soviet Union did not have enough time to promote democracy of which Lenin dreamed. One should also recall Stalinism, the role played by Stalin's personal qualities in combination with the maximum concentration of power in his hands. Such are the reasons that impeded the advancement of democracy in its true, Leninist sense.

The current process of democratization is changing first of all people's self-awareness and self-perception. It is a difficult and slow process. It calls for the establishment of new institutions and mechanisms that will guarantee the strength of socialist democracy. Everything goes to show that this process is developing.

As far as Poland is concerned we have set up the Constitutional Tribunal to consider any infringement on the Constitution by the authorities. We also have a commissioner for human rights. He examines the complaints of people who cannot find protection elsewhere. I know that you are also engaged in a similar quest. The aim is to make a man actively working in the system of free production relations equally free, as far as possible, in other spheres too. I say as far as possible, because there can be no absolute freedom from society. Talk about absolute freedom is nonsense, utopia, or mendacious propaganda.

R.B. Or a call to anarchy?

M.R. That's right. A hypothetic social system without any restrictions is absolute anarchy. The state protects the interests of its citizens, but it also restricts their freedom to some extent for the sake of these interests. So it can be said that the current process of democratization has been prompted by the very logic of historical development. A time was bound to come when the appropriate conditions had matured, and this time has come now.

In Moscow, I talked with officials in the Party's Central Committee, research workers, and people of great intellect. They amazed me with their plans, bold views of the future and sober well-grounded appraisal of the past. But these people were also at work earlier - ten or fifteen years ago and more. They apparently began to reflect on their ideas long ago. But in those times the appropriate social and political conditions did not exist for the implementation of their interesting plans.

In this context, mention should also be made of the leader who is helping create an atmosphere favourable to the release and use of intellectual energy. For quite evident reasons, little is being said in your country about the role of the party's General Secretary. I can say, however, that he plays a great role indeed.

R.B. How do you regard glasnost in the Soviet Union? Is it legitimate to talk about limits of glasnost? This question was raised in the pages of our magazine by Professor Anatoly Butenko.

M.R. Glasnost in the Soviet Union is regarded as a great breakthrough. Take the present treatment of past history. It is infinitely sincere. I asked myself: why, what for? And I found the answer: the success of perestroika is impossible without glasnost, without absolute and uncompromising frankness, because only this road ensures guarantees of progress without the mistakes and delusions of the past.

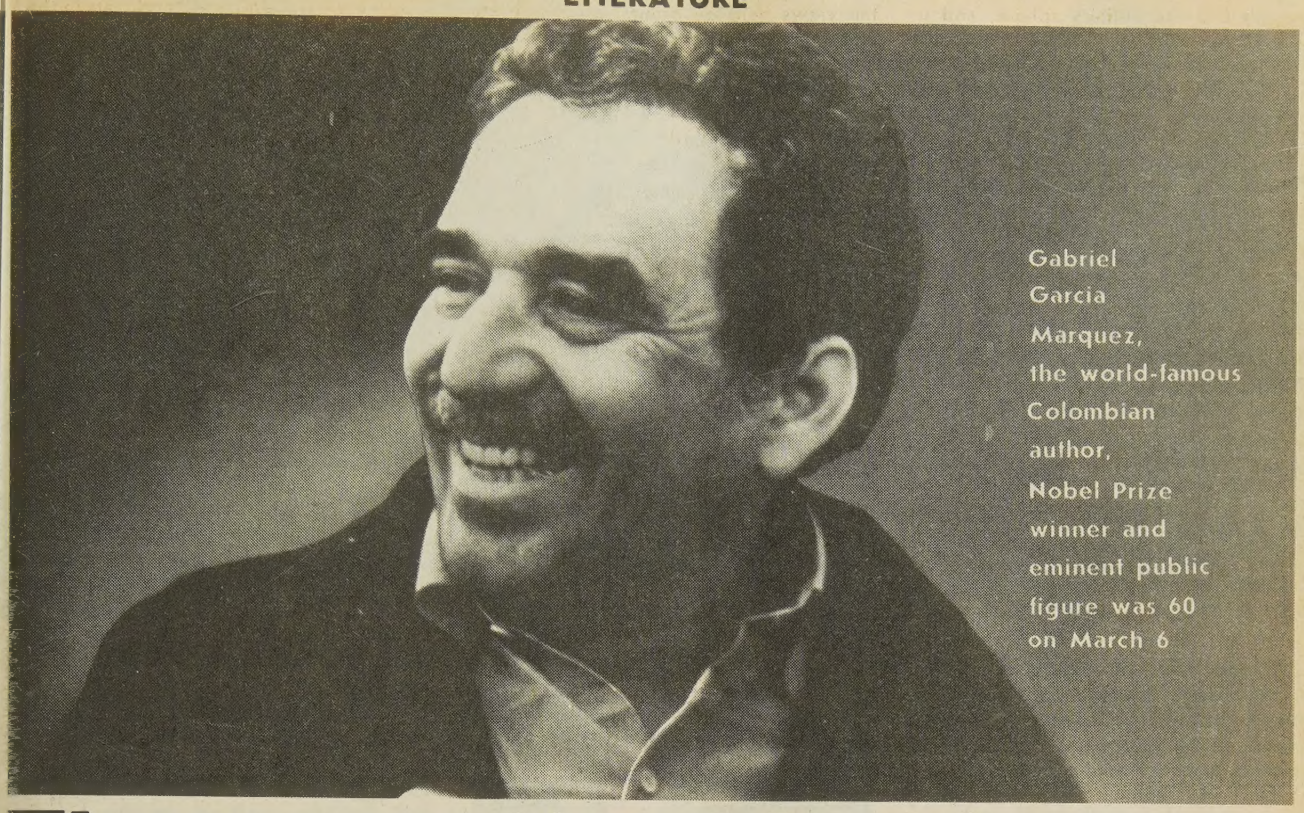
I think there are no limits to glasnost. I have not read Professor Butenko's article, but I believe that he shares my opinion. However, glasnost, as a value and an instrument of policy, should be subordinated to the main strategic goal - it should help consolidate socialist relations and the socialist system.

I have seen for myself that the socialist system is inviolable in the Soviet Union. It is within the bounds of this consciousness and conviction that glasnost is being implemented, and in such conditions even the most cruel truth seems quite acceptable.

In Poland, unlike the Soviet Union, there are forces which openly call themselves anti-socialist and, moreover, seek to change the present system. These forces also make use of the atmosphere of glasnost. That is why the situation is different in our country.

R.B. On behalf of our readers and our editorial board, I should like to thank you for this interview.

Warsaw



Gabriel Garcia Marquez, the world-famous Colombian author, Nobel Prize winner and eminent public figure was 60 on March 6

The unpredictable Marquez

There is no need to introduce this leading exponent of modern prose writing, one of the world's most widely read authors. But perhaps we do not know so much about him as an ardent champion of peace or as a strikingly original writer of essays in which he reflects upon the earth's fate. At the inaugural session of the six-nation summit in August 1986, he gave the following impassioned warning:

"One short minute after the final nuclear explosion, more than half of humanity will be dead, dust and smoke on the flame-engulfed continents will blot out the sun, and pitch darkness will reign; there will begin a winter of orange rains and freezing cold whirlwind tornados that will change ocean temperatures and reverse the courses of rivers, with fish dying of thirst in waves of fire and birds unable to speck the sky; eternal snow will blanket the Sahara Desert, the boundless Amazonia will vanish from the face of the earth beneath the deluge of hail, and the era of rock music and heart transplants will tick backwards towards its glacial infancy; meanwhile at three o'clock in the afternoon of that nightmarish Monday, when the greatest of disasters occurs, the few representatives of the human race to survive the initial shock and the elite in reliable shelters will have escaped only to die later from nightmarish memories; every living thing will be gone, and in the dawning chaos of dampness and eternal night only the cockroach will provide the sole indication that there was once a thing called life....The increasingly widely accepted hypothesis that the Earth may be the only place in the solar system destined for that miraculous gift of life inexorably induces the staggering conclusion that the arms race is contrary to the dictates of common sense."

Craftsman of letters

As I see it, two novels have transformed the artistic awareness of our readership. These are Mikhail Bulgakov's "The Master and Margarita" and Gabriel Marquez's "One Hundred Years of Solitude." The Colombian author's amazing historical novel came for many in the years of stagnation, as we now call them, as a revelation that stirred the mind and generated a totally new way of thinking.

Marquez is more than an artist in the realm of literature. He is also an artist in life itself, because he never ceases to mastermind cultural processes.

He is a true master of the creative spirit, one of the sponsors of the International School of Cinema and Television founded in Cuba. At this school, with its sophisticated equipment, he lectures young people from the Afro-Asian and Latin American countries. He invests no small sums from his own resources in this noble undertaking.

Marquez is an extremely sociable person, despite his being so tremendously busy. True, many have never met him in the flesh. But I know writers who have come under his influence, and not just Russian writers. One could mention Chinghiz Aitmatov and others.

I would like him to produce a new novel in the spirit of "One Hundred Years of Solitude." But it would, of course, be nothing like the previous novel. I would like him to write a novel as unlike "One Hundred Years of Solitude" as "One Hundred Years of Solitude" is unlike all other novels.

ANDREI VOZNESENSKY

Scenography: An art in its own right

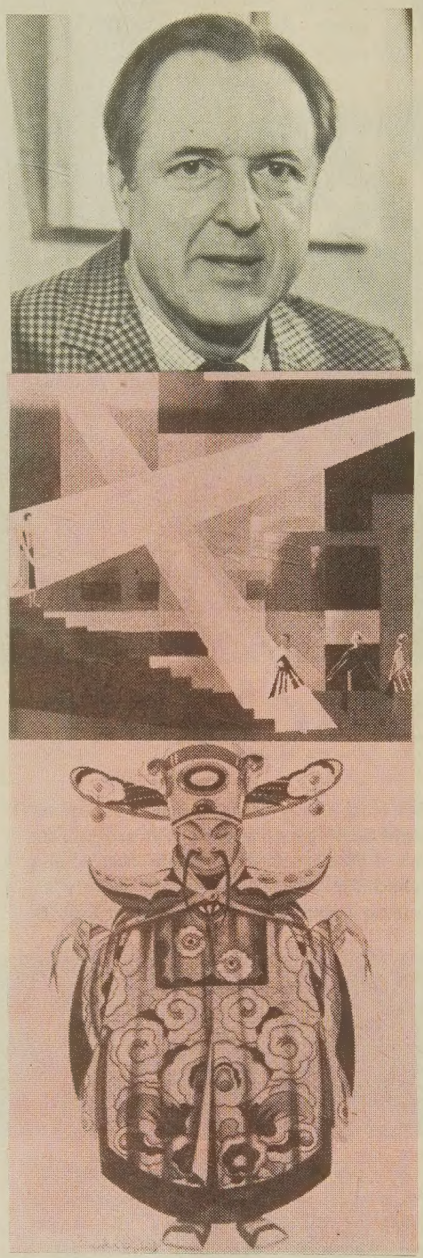
An exhibition of Russian stage scenery designing has opened at the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow. Visitors are able to see the costumes and stage scenery used in Moscow theatres for the production of "The Blue Blouse" and "Crooked Jim" in the Theatre of the Revolution and the Kamerny Theatre, the Leningrad Mariinsky Theatre and the Hermitage, and the Tiflis state theatre, as well as the preparations made for a staging of "The Storming of the Winter Palace" in Palace Square in Petrograd on November 7, 1920....

At the turn of the 20th century a remarkable situation developed in Russia: bright stars emerged simultaneously in the theatre and in the world of painters, stars that illuminated the history of the arts, among them Yermolova, Komissarzhevskaya, Chaliapin, Sobinov, Stanislavsky, Meyerhold, Korovin, Vrubel, Chagal, Petrov-Vodkin, Serov... Stage producers, actors and painters - all with new ideas and approaches. It was inevitable that their paths should cross, and at the point of intersection a new form of art developed - stage scenery designing. Unfortunately, few of those remarkable sketches for stage scenery have survived. But some have...

Nikita Lobanov-Rostovskii has brought from Britain his rich collection of sketches for Russian stage scenery in 1880-1930. It is made up of about a thousand sketches by 115 Russian artists, and about half of them are on show at the exhibition in Moscow. It is a comparatively new collection, started just 25 years ago.

"At the end of 1954," Nikita Lobanov-Rostovskii said, "I happened to visit the Diaghilev exhibition in London. It was the first of its kind that I had ever seen, but I immediately wanted to start a collection like that of my own. I began to buy sketches, and in increasing numbers as my earnings grew...."

It all began with tea parties. Thanks to his Russian origin, Lobanov-Rostovskii was able to establish contacts quickly with Russian émigré circles in London and Oxford (he himself emigrated to Britain at the beginning of the fifties from Bulgaria where he had lived with his family). An Oxford University student, Lobanov-Rostovskii was often a guest of the descendants of famous artists and ballerinas. There, during evening tea parties, he learned a great deal about the history of Russian theatrical art and was shown sketches that had survived. Whenever he could afford it he would buy sketches from these families for his collection. As for the collecting "itch," it probably runs in the family. His grandfather Alexei Lobanov-Rostovskii, a prominent diplomat and onetime foreign minister of the Russian Empire, was the proud owner of a unique collection of Russian paintings which he later, in 1896, gave over as a gift to the Russian Museum. Lobanov-Rostovskii's wife Nina was infected by the penchant of her husband towards scenography. While working at the Reader's Digest research section, she helped collect reference material on paintings.



Nikita Lobanov-Rostovskii.

Sketch for stage sets by Alexander Exter.

Costume designed by Georgi Pozhedayev for Puccini's "Turandot."

Photos by V. Panov

How do you add to your collection now!

"Mostly at auctions. I buy sketches and paintings at Russian or Ballet auctions in London, Paris and New York. Sometimes the owners themselves approach me. Usually about once a week I get a letter from people saying they have something to offer and would like to show it to me....

At other times, friends help. As in the case of Nikolai Benois. He was in the Soviet Union staging a production of the opera "Mazepa" at the Bolshoi. When he had finished working on the opera I bought all his sketches and donated them to the Pushkin Museum." (The gift also included 12 works by A. Exter. All in all, 68 works will remain in the museum.)

Although not an expert in the fine arts, Lobanov-Rostovskii displayed remarkable acumen in timing the start of his collection. If anyone tried to follow his example today, he would have little chance of success. Sources are drying up; there are fewer and fewer family collections....

Your collection is very popular in the West, as are Russian paintings in general. And it can probably be said that in recent years interest in the art of Russia has increased still more.

"In my opinion, your country is doing far from everything it should to popularize Russian and Soviet culture abroad. Take, for example, the Metropolitan Museum. It has about 500 canvases by Russian painters that are never exhibited because of shortage of space. The last exhibition of Russian paintings was organized there almost thirty years ago. If premises are built, these works could be on display permanently. As for temporary exhibitions, they are like a ballet performance. People see them, admire them - and then they are forgotten. I wouldn't like Russian art abroad to share a similar fate. But that's the case at present. What organization in your country could undertake the job? Well, I think it should be the Soviet Culture Fund. After all, it was set up to popularize culture...."

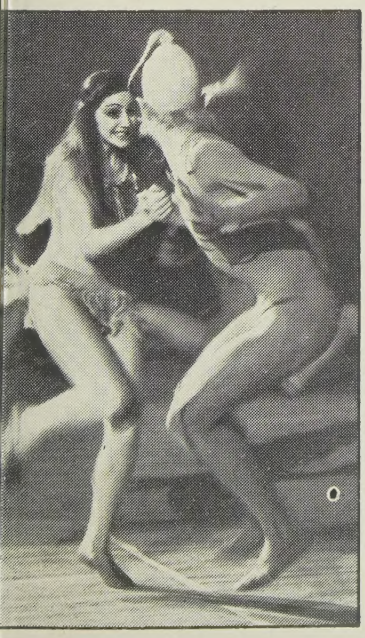
IRINA LAGUNINA

THE THEATRE OF DANCE

ot long ago the folk
nce group widely
own as the Moiseyev
mpany celebrated
50th anniversary.
r many years it has not
ly been the national
ide of the Soviet Union
t has also held
important place
the international
ncing scene.
e company is the
filment of the dream
its founder and leader,
or Moiseyev, an alloy
the talent and selfless
rk of choreographer
d dancers alike.

Igor Moiseyev began his artistic career with the Bolshoi Theatre, where he danced with such distinguished ballerinas as Yekaterina Geltser and Victorina Kriger. Later, he arranged dances for Prokofiev's opera "The love of the three oranges." His work was greatly praised by the composer. But in all those years Moiseyev never lost interest in folk dance. In 1937, already a well-known director, he founded a folk dance company. Its repertoire includes more than 300 dances of the peoples of the Soviet Union and many other countries. Russian, Polish and Spanish dances impress audiences with their rhythm, movement, and inimitable national spirit.

Photos
by V. Vyatkin
and A. Knyazev



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